ALIENS AND CREATURES: ADVENTURE BOOK

THE NEXT WORLD BY STEVE LYONS

WHAT'S GOING ON

It was in the middle of the forty-first century that the Cybermen came to Yedias. They found a struggling human-like race, low on resources. Ignorant of technology, they lived their lives in total subservience to a pantheon of silver gods. To the Yedarians, the Cybermen were more than just the first alien beings they had seen. They were their gods made manifest. They did not need to be conquered. They were eager to do anything that was asked of them, quick to volunteer for the harvest – and the Cybermen, of course, had no compunctions about fully exploiting this organic weakness.

They took thousands of healthy Yedarians away in their ships and converted them into unfeeling monsters.

And that could have been the end of the story.

But the Cybermen, seeing in the Yedarians' blind obedience a rare opportunity, chose to leave some of them alive – to serve as breeders. Their race would endure as a continuing, self-replenishing source of fresh, willing converts to the Cyber cause.

At least, that was the plan.

Every five years since then, the people of Yedias have celebrated Ascension Day – the day when five hundred of their most perfect, healthiest males march willingly through a portal in their settlement's largest temple. On the other side of that portal, they think, is Paradise – and the fulfilment of their gods' promise to them:

'You will become like us.' In fact, the portal is a trans-mat terminal. It beams the Yedarian sacrifices to the heart of a Cyber-space station on the edge of their solar system. Over a period of almost eighty years, thousands of Yedarian pilgrims have sought the secrets of existence and met with the most grisly fate imaginable.

Thirteen years ago, everything changed again. The Cybermen fought in a great war and lost. Their space station, although situated far from the conflict, was infected by a human-engineered virus and fell from the sky. It crash-landed on a small planetoid, even as the virus claimed the lives of all the Cybermen on board. But the trans-mat device was undamaged. The Yedarians kept on coming.

PROLOGUE

The adventure begins as the characters arrive in the Yedarians' 'Paradise', whether by TARDIS (preferably), sent by the Time Agency or by some other means.

The year, their instruments may tell them, is 4143. They are in a field of yellow corn and small fruiting plants, beneath a perfect blue sky. Numerous small, makeshift tents are scattered haphazardly about them. The air smells sweet, like apples and honey, and the temperature is comfortably warm. However, a character with the Feel the Turn of the Universe Trait will, on a successful Awareness and Ingenuity roll

(**Difficulty 15**, with the usual +2 to the roll, for the Trait), sense that something is not quite right. A Fantastic result will reveal that both the atmosphere and the gravity here are artificial.

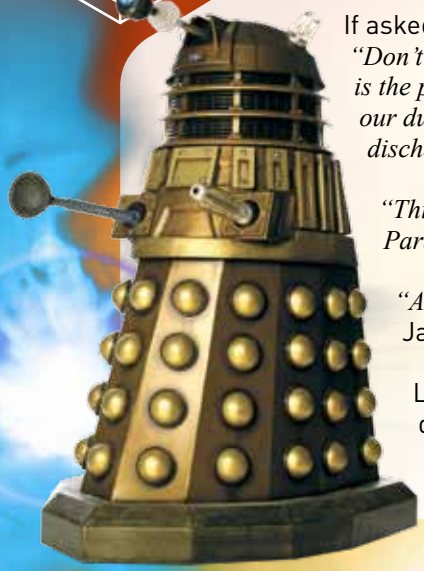
The Yedarians have been tending to their crops. The field is teeming with them – it's almost uncomfortably crowded. The Yedarians are, in appearance, indistinguishable from humans. They wear hooded robes of bright orange, with a black, stylised 'C' on the chest. An Awareness and Knowledge roll from someone with the necessary background to know something of the Cybermen (**Difficulty 18**) will detect something familiar about that design (make it **Difficulty 12** if they've actually met the Cybermen before).

An Awareness and Ingenuity roll (**Difficulty 9**) will reveal that the Yedarians are all handsome men between their late twenties and mid-forties. A Good result will reveal, despite their concealing robes, that they all appear to be in excellent shape.

Without exchanging a word, the Yedarians close in around the new arrivals, eyeing them curiously.

The Yedarians will not speak unless spoken to – but two of their number, two young blond men named Jarryk and Grayb, will answer any questions put to them by a human-seeming male character, assuming him to be one of their own.

If questioned by a female, the Yedarians will express surprise that she is here at all but will still be cooperative. However, they will be nervous and tongue-tied around any character with the Alien Appearance Trait.



If asked where this is, Jarryk will answer, *"Don't you know? This is the Next World. This is the place to which our spirits ascend when our duties in the mortal realm have been discharged."*

"This is the afterlife," Grayb adds. *"This is Paradise."*

"And for you to have come here," says Jarryk, *"you must have died yourselves."*

Let the characters ask a few more questions of Jarryk and Grayb (see the 'Talking to the Yedarians' sidebar for details of how they might answer them). However, don't let them learn too much at this point, just give them a few teasers.

Suddenly, there is a disturbance in the crowd. Someone is pushing his way toward the characters. Like the rest of the Yedarians, this man wears simple robes that bear the 'C' symbol. However, his robes are silver and, in place of a hood, he sports a stiff, silver headdress. This comprises a tight-fitting cap and a pair of concertinaed earmuffs, from each of which a tube juts upwards and turns inwards, to meet at the cap's top. To put it another way, he is wearing a makeshift Cyber-helmet, minus the faceplate. The man is also carrying a Cyberman particle gun.

This new arrival is a Yedarian Priest. His name is Kenryk and he is forty years old, with a beaklike nose, thin lips and severe, sunken eyes.

"Intruders!" yells Kenryk. *"Intruders in our paradise. You are not of our kind. You despoil this place with your presence. You must be… deleted!"*

He brings up the gun and starts firing...

ACT 1 – STRANGERS IN PARADISE

Kenryk intends to gun down the characters one-by-one – choose one at random to be his first victim. They're unlikely to be able to talk him out of this – in addition to his high Resolve, he has the minor Obligation Trait, in this case to his religious order. Kenryk might (just) be persuaded that his silver gods would want the characters alive – but any suggestion that he should not follow those gods, or indeed the slightest hint that the characters don't believe in them, and he will be all the more determined to 'delete' them.

If Kenryk is talked out of killing the characters, he will order them to precede him to the Great Temple where the High Priest can examine them (see Act 2). At this point, he will suddenly find his gun arm jostled by a robed Yedarian, whose

TALKING TO THE YEDARIANS

The characters have several opportunities, over the course of this adventure, to talk to the Yedarians in Paradise. Here are some points to bear in mind when they do. The following information is strictly background – the characters don't need to know it to advance through the adventure – but it might satisfy their curiosity and flesh out the world in which they find themselves.

The Yedarians don't know the name 'Cyberman'. They refer only to 'the gods'. No one of their generation has seen one of these gods. They have only the vague descriptions of silver giants handed down to them by their ancestors. Their religious texts tell them that their gods first entered our universe from a higher plane of existence, many hundreds of years ago.

The Yedarians number just under fifteen hundred. Each was sent here two, seven or twelve years ago, as part of a five hundred-strong group. They were all between twenty-five and thirty-five years old when they arrived. They all came through the 'portal' in the Conversion Chamber but members of the second and third intakes would have been met by Priests and immediately escorted outside. Members of the first intake, like Nethyn, may have seen a little more of the Great Temple before they were driven out of it.

Yedias has a Level 2 Technology, its people having only recently discovered metalworking. Continuation of the species is extremely important to the Yedarians (an edict that the Cybermen have been keen to reinforce). Men are in short supply (because of the five-yearly sacrifice of the best of them) and so each is expected to father as many children as possible.

The Yedarians believe that women are inferior to men and cannot pass through the portal into Paradise. However, if a woman is devout enough in life, and bears enough children, then her reward will be reincarnation as a man. Conversely, a man who sins in life will be reborn as a woman.

The Yedarians' life here is monotonous, consisting of little more than tending to their crops and praying. They're also well aware that their Paradise is becoming overcrowded – but they're in deep denial about these things. As far as they're concerned, this is the perfect world and any suggestion to the contrary will be indignantly denied and perhaps denounced as blasphemy.

A Yedarian fearing for his soul may 'cross himself' with a Y symbol running from each shoulder to his navel.

Nobody dies here. How can they, when they are already in the Next World? However, if pressed, some Yedarians might remember that a friend once collapsed with chest pains and appeared to stop breathing. The Priests rushed him into the Great Temple and he was never seen again. They were told that the man had been chosen to join the gods and there was much rejoicing. See also the 'Blight' sidebar (on p.6).

There is no nighttime here in Paradise. The gods tell the Yedarians when they should sleep, by inducing tiredness in them.
All Yedarians have a 'y' in the last syllable of their names. It is a signifier of the gods' blessing upon them. Typical names for Yedarians – in case the characters insist on talking to 'bit part' characters – include Tomnyk, Caranyd, Varwyn, Tankryn and Pytt.

hood is drawn tight to conceal his face. This Yedarian is called Nethyn and he will yell at the characters to 'Run!' while Kenryk is distracted. Whether or not they do, Nethyn will disappear into the crowd.

If, by now, the characters haven't taken the hint and ran, then more Priests will start to arrive. They can go with Kenryk as instructed, or make a fight of it. But if they choose the latter option, they will find that reinforcements just keep on coming...

CHASE!

So, the chances are that by now at least some of the characters are running for their lives. It might occur to them that they can duck inside their TARDIS, if they have one – however, this is only an option for (at a push) two of them, as the others would be gunned down in the bottleneck of the doorway.

They're wading through crops, avoiding tents and guide ropes, not to mention Yedarians, so the **Difficulty** of the terrain is 15. Kenryk pursues them alone to begin with but two more Yedarian Priests will soon hear his shouts and join the Chase.

Fortunately, the regular Yedarians aren't really an obstruction. They aren't used to taking the initiative and are pacifists to boot – in most cases, the characters will be past them before they know what's going on. However, a Failure result from the usual Coordination and Athletics check might indicate that a few Yedarians have decided to block the way ahead, or even that one has stuck out a foot.

The Yedarians will make it impossible for the characters to hide from their pursuers, as there will always be a potential informant watching them. There are, however, plenty of orange robes available, inside any tent (most are empty; some have two Yedarian occupants, both sleeping) or hanging from washing lines strung between them. Any character with a humanoid shape and a few seconds' grace should be able to grab one, throw it on and lose themselves in the crowd. A Subterfuge roll will only be necessary if they get too close to a Priest.

If Kenryk thinks he is losing his prey, he will open fire on the nearest of them. The other two Priests, however, are less trigger-happy. Any character they capture will be marched to the Great Temple, and the High Priest, at gunpoint.

Any character captured by Kenryk will have one more chance to talk him out of carrying out a summary execution. Should he fail, the expenditure of 1 Story Point will summon another Priest to do the job for him. The Priest will persuade Kenryk that High Priest Jobyn would want to meet these intruders.

At the Gamemaster's discretion, this Chase can be used to split the characters into smaller groups. With all the obstacles in their path, it will certainly be difficult for them to stick together; they might even think they stand a better chance of escape if they separate. And, of course, some of them might be captured...

In the event that one or more characters are indeed captured by the Priests and the Gamemaster really wants to keep the group together, then Kenryk can hold a gun to a character's head and demand that the others surrender. However, it would be best for the story if at least some characters can remain at liberty at this point. There is still much for them to discover outside the Great Temple.

THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

The field comes to an abrupt end, cut off in what appears to be a straight line (closer inspection will reveal that it does, in fact, have a slight inward curve). There are no tents and no people beyond this line – just a barren, rocky, uneven landscape.

A character fleeing from the Priests for more than a few rounds might come across this sight and find it an appealing one. There are many rises and outcrops out there behind which a fugitive could hide – and nobody to observe them as they do so.

Unfortunately, things aren't quite that simple. Anyone approaching this line at speed will have to make an Awareness and Coordination roll (**Difficulty 15**) to see what's ahead of them and – should they choose to do so – stop short of it. A character that crosses the line will find that the sky has turned black, that they are freezing cold and feeling lighter than they did before... and that they can't breathe. They have stepped into a vacuum!

It will take a Resolve and Strength roll to hold their breath (**Difficulty 12** or **Difficulty 15** if they

came running across the line). Assuming they are not disabled or killed, however, they should have no problem stepping back to where the sky is blue again.

If the characters haven't already deduced that the atmosphere and gravity of the Yedarians' paradise is artificially generated, they should be able to do so now (an Ingenuity and Science roll, **Difficulty 12**, if the players don't work it out for themselves) and, clearly, the effect only extends so far. Should the characters take the time to look, they will eventually discern that the atmospheric 'bubble' is perfectly hemispherical, about two kilometres across – and that the Great Temple lies at its exact centre.

NETHYN

At some point, the characters will encounter Nethyn. He may already have helped them against the gun-toting Kenryk – although they won't recognise his face from that encounter, as it was hidden. Nethyn will make a surreptitious approach to any group of characters who escape the Priests; he will knock on the door of their TARDIS if he has to. If the characters have not already disguised themselves in orange robes, he will suggest that they do so. He will lead them to his tent, which stands on the bank of a small, crystal clear, placid lake. They should be safe in here, he says, for a time.

If no characters escape the Priests, then they will encounter Nethyn in Act 2 (see p.7).

Nethyn's tent is not quite large enough to stand up in and will be a squeeze for more than three people. It contains two camp beds, one of which has two sets of orange robes folded at its foot. Nethyn won't let anybody sit on this bed.

Nethyn is full of questions for the characters. Who are they? Where did they come from? Unlike most Yedarians, he will willingly accept tales of travels in space and time. He will also answer any questions put to him.

At forty-four, Nethyn is one of the oldest men here. His face is care-lined, his hair turning grey. He has a world-weary air about him. He passed through the portal on Yedias twelve years ago – and he can't help but notice that, contrary to the promises of his religious texts, he has continued to age since then. He has begun to ask questions – and this makes him different from the majority of his fellows (see stats for Yedarian Malcontent).

It worries Nethyn that, when he and his 499 fellow sacrifices arrived in Paradise, there was nobody here to greet them. Two more intakes have arrived since then – but what happened to all those who preceded them? Where did they go?

Nethyn is bright enough to realise that, whatever was supposed to happen when he came here, it has gone badly wrong. He suspects the Priests of hiding something. He knows most of the Priests by name; they were drawn from his group of sacrifices. He remembers the High Priest, Jobyn, in particular, as he went to school with him. He considers Jobyn a slimy, self-serving man, who saw an opportunity to seize power here while people were confused and took it. Of course, he wouldn't dare voice these sentiments in public. But the main reason for Nethyn's discontentment is the loss of his best friend.

Arkyll shared a tent with Nethyn – his is the empty bed (the characters might suspect that, in fact, Nethyn and Arkyll shared a lot more than living quarters, but Nethyn will never admit to this). About two months ago, Arkyll came down with 'the Blight' (see sidebar, overleaf). Kenryk examined him and announced that he was to be cast out of Paradise.

The last a distraught Nethyn saw of Arkyll was when the Priests carried him off into the Great Temple. But he knows that Arkyll was a good man! So, lately, Nethyn has been thinking that perhaps this place is not the promised afterlife of his people after all. He wants no part of any Paradise that would exclude somebody so dear to him. That's why the arrival of the characters is important to him and such a threat to the Priests. They have experience of worlds beyond this one. They can put the lie to everything the Yedarians believe. Of course, Nethyn's people are unlikely to listen to the truth and his fellow Malcontents number only a handful, at present. He needs to find concrete proof of the Priests' mendacity and that proof can only lie in the Great Temple.

THE BLIGHT

Few Yedarians have not experienced 'the Blight' at some point in their lives. A common illness on their home world, the Blight is an airborne virus whose symptoms are a rampant fever and a light purple rash. The Yedarians have no cure for it – but that's because they have never developed simple antibiotics. Instead, as with most things they don't understand, they attribute the Blight to their gods. It is seen as a punishment for impure thoughts. That's why it doesn't surprise the Yedarians that the Blight can even strike in Paradise.

Any character examining a Blight victim will see, with an Ingenuity and Medicine roll (Difficulty 12) that there is nothing seriously wrong with him. Indeed, the fever tends to run its course within two to three weeks.

The Yedarian Priests, however, think differently. About three years ago, they ruled that those in Paradise whom the gods would strike down with the Blight were unworthy of remaining. So long as they stayed, said the Priests, they could never recover from their illness. The only solution was to do as the gods willed and 'cast the sinners out of Paradise'. Blight sufferers, such as Nethyn's friend Arkyll, are taken from their tents and carried into the Great Temple. And from there...?

Nethyn has been inside the Great Temple once before. If asked, he can describe the Conversion Chamber and the Main Temple Area (see p.11) and he knows the way to both. Within hours of Nethyn's arrival in Paradise, however, Jobyn took control – and one of his first pronouncements was that nobody but he and his chosen Priests should be allowed inside this 'most holy of places'.

Nethyn needs to get back inside that Temple. He aches to learn the truth about his world. He asks the characters to help him.

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE TARDIS...

If the characters arrived in a TARDIS (or a small enough ship), and return to their landing site, they will find that their vehicle has drawn some unwanted attention. Two Priests are rigging up an anti-gravity harness using Cyber-technology (one of them could be Kenryk, if he is available). This involves sticking six metal discs to the TARDIS's exterior, in a precise pattern, whereupon it will float up from the ground and follow a handheld steering device. It is a simple enough task (**Difficulty 12**) but with the Priests' complete lack of the Technology Skill it will take them a few attempts to complete it. Once they have done so, they will take the TARDIS into the Great Temple.

This gives the characters an opportunity. If they can get past the Priests (if Nethyn is with them, he can rustle up a couple of fellow Malcontents to help with a distraction, although they won't agree to do anything too dangerous) and into the TARDIS, they can be carried into the Great Temple inside it.

OUTSIDE THE GREAT TEMPLE

The Great Temple, as the characters may already have worked out, lies at the exact centre of the Yedarians' Paradise. It is, of course, the crashed Cyber-space station.

The station is shaped like a spinning top. However, it is currently half-buried in the side of a grassy hill. The visible part of the station juts out from this hill at a twenty-degree angle, rising to a height of about ten metres. The station is clearly alien in nature – it sticks out like a sore thumb – and an Awareness and Science roll (**Difficulty 12**) will confirm that it must have crashed here with some force.

Its dull grey metal surfaces, however, are hardly crumpled and they show few signs of the heat of re-entry – that's forty-first century Cyber-technology for you! There is only one way into the station. A huge, round airlock door stands,

propped open by a hefty rock, a short way up the slope. It is guarded by two Priests, who will not let anyone but their fellow Priests pass.

In the area before the Great Temple, about forty Yedarians kneel before a third Priest, who leads them in prayer, assisted by a fourth and a fifth. They are offering thanks for their perfect life in Paradise, asking the gods to spare them the Blight and looking forward to the fulfilment of their promise that 'we will become like you'.

It doesn't matter how long the characters watch this area, little will change. A bell is rung every hour and a new set of worshippers replaces the old set; likewise, the Priests rotate their duties with replacements arriving from both inside and outside the Great Temple. In between times, the characters will occasionally see a Priest or two – but nobody else – entering or leaving the Temple.

If they have not been back to their TARDIS since it landed, they will eventually see two Priests leading it into the Great Temple on an anti-gravity harness, as described in the previous section. If you're feeling especially generous, you could have an anti-gravity disc fall off the TARDIS while it is still out of sight of the worshippers outside the Temple. As the Priests struggle to reattach it, the characters will have another chance to smuggle themselves on board.

Finding another way into the Great Temple – without being taken inside as a prisoner – will not be so easy. The Priests at the door will not leave their position for anything, nor will they let any non-Priest past them. They are doing the gods' will by guarding their Temple, so their Obligation Traits will counter any failure of Resolve they might suffer. Remember, too, that these guards will know all their fellow Priests by sight – so, even if the characters can get hold of silver robes and a headdress (and the only way to do that, out here, is to take them off somebody!), it may not be disguise enough.

Nethyn can help, mustering a grand total of four fellow Malcontents to assist in providing distractions or, with a little persuasion from the characters, even fighting. In the latter event, all five Priests in this area will shoot to kill but they won't pursue anybody who flees from the battle – the security of the Great Temple is paramount!

ACT 2 – 'YOU WILL BECOME LIKE US'

Any character passing through the airlock doors into the Great Temple will feel momentarily off-balance as their centre of gravity shifts a little. The space station generates its own artificial gravity and is compensating for the twenty-degree angle at which it currently rests. The walls, floor and ceiling in here are all dull, grey and functional. Cybermen don't go in much for aesthetics!

A windowless main corridor loops around the perimeter of the station's spinning top shape. Two more corridors form concentric circles with this one, closer to the centre of the 'top'. All three are linked by six radial passageways, which terminate in the Conversion Chamber (see p.11).

Any character at large in the Temple will have to avoid the Priests who move freely about it. Should the Priests be aware that they have intruders (say, if there was a fight outside) such encounters are, of course, more likely. It is up to the Gamemaster where and how often roving Priests appear – just go for whatever best serves the story. There are, in any case, plenty of opportunities to lose a pursuer in here – lots of unlocked doors and corners, and few dead ends. In a Chase, the characters need only pull four areas ahead, instead of the usual six, to escape.

As they explore, the characters will find numerous disused laboratories. Much of the equipment inside these was shattered when the space station crashed – but still, these rooms are a gift for anyone planning a bit of Jiggery-Pokery.

There are also plenty of rooms converted to serve as Priests' quarters. These are quite spartan, containing little more than a single bed each – which may, if the characters are unlucky, be occupied by a sleeping Priest or even an awake one. There are Priests' robes and headdresses to be had in these rooms, as well as religious texts (mostly generic stuff but if the characters insist on reading you can give them some information from the 'Talking to the Yedarians' sidebar, see p.3).

Almost every room on the station has a wall-mounted communications terminal. However, the majority of these are dead. Should the characters hack into a live one, they will be able to extract only very limited information.

THE TARDIS

Anyone inside the characters' TARDIS can watch on its scanner as the Priests set it down in a small alcove, off one of the radial corridors, and disassemble the anti-gravity harness. If the Priests are aware that there are people inside the ship, then two will remain on guard outside its doors. Otherwise, the characters will be able to slip out unseen and start exploring. If no characters are inside the TARDIS, then they will have to search to find it here. You could delay this discovery until Act 3, if you wish.

THE MAIN TEMPLE AREA

The first characters to be taken prisoner are escorted to this long, wedge-shaped room, close to the centre of the space station. Alternatively, they might find it by following Nethyn's directions, by realising that this is the area most visited by the Priests and by following one – or just by stumbling upon one of the four archways that lead into it.

An Awareness and Knowledge roll (**Difficulty 9**) reveals that this was once the space station's centre of operations. However, its instrument banks are covered in silver cloths on which black candles burn, providing the room's only light. The walls are hung with silver and black drapes. A large, freestanding console has been appropriated as an altar, with a sad-looking collection of trinkets – a silver goblet, a ceremonial knife, a small bell – arrayed upon it. Behind this, at the narrow end of the room, a circular hatchway in the floor stands open.

There are six to ten Priests in this area at all times. Some busy themselves with religious rituals, kneeling and mumbling prayers. A few might be seen poking and prodding at a console and the wiring inside it, not really understanding what they're doing and not getting anywhere. Despite all this activity, there are plenty of dark alcoves in which intruders can conceal themselves, and consoles and curtains to hide behind.

Any prisoners will be stood before the 'altar' and told to await the High Priest. If Kenryk is not already here, he should arrive now if possible. One of the characters' captors will ring the small bell. About a minute later, heavy, clanging footsteps can be heard from somewhere beneath the floor – and a moment after this, an imposing silver figure emerges from the open hatchway.

It is a Cyberman!

Or rather, it isn't... although, thanks to the dim candlelight, it takes a moment (and an Awareness and Knowledge/Technology roll, **Difficulty 12**) for the characters to recognise this. By the time they do, High Priest Jobyn will have started talking, in a surprisingly human voice. He is, in fact, a regular Yedarian man, forty years old, who just happens to be wearing a (genuine) suit of Cyber-armour. It is noticeably loose at the joints and flaps a little when he moves.

Jobyn, in contrast to Kenryk, is quite polite to the characters. He asks them who they are and listens with interest to anything they tell him. He can see that they're versed in technology – the very manner of their arrival is proof of this – and he will ask for their help.

"Our gods created this Paradise for us," says Jobyn. *"Their holy machines ensure that we have air to breathe, and food and water – but the machines are old now, and damaged, and we lack the understanding to repair them. It is my fear that, soon, very soon, our Paradise will die."*

If no characters have been taken prisoner, then let them watch as Kenryk rings the bill and summons Jobyn, to update him on the Priests' (lack of) progress in their search for the intruders. An agitated Jobyn will instruct Kenryk to redouble his efforts. He will express his hope that these newcomers could be the salvation of his people.

Unless the characters come out of hiding and talk to him, however, they will learn no more than this.

If the characters refuse to help Jobyn, or seem incapable of so doing, then he will regretfully ask Kenryk to take them to the Containment Area (see below). Kenryk will be more than pleased to oblige.

If Jobyn and Kenryk can identify one particular prisoner as having the skills they need, then Kenryk might suggest holding his friends hostage against his cooperation. Jobyn will agree – for the sake of his people, he says – and Kenryk will take all but this most skilled prisoner (and one assistant, if persuaded) to the Containment Area.

Jobyn's fears are well-founded. Beneath the silver sheets, most of the instrument banks are already dead; just a few lights blink away on a handful of them. An Ingenuity and Technology roll (**Difficulty 18** adjusted for Technology Level 7) will reveal that they have been crippled by a computer virus and further damaged in the space station's crash.

The Cybermen were able to save some systems by isolating them before they were infected. Another Ingenuity and Technology roll (**Difficulty 12**) will confirm that the atmospheric bubble around the station is being maintained from here – but not for much longer, it seems. The station's power cells are solar-charged and they just aren't getting as much sunlight as they need. The bubble could collapse at any moment – and when it does, it will expose the whole of the Yedarians' Paradise to space.

With a new power source (say a character's Gadget, or even a Cyberman particle gun), an Ingenuity and Technology roll (**Difficulty 15**) and some time, the bubble can be shored up for a short while longer (for months, perhaps, if somebody thinks to run a set of jump leads to a TARDIS). However, this can only be a temporary measure.

Jobyn does not stick around to see the outcome of the characters' work. He has 'business to attend to', and sweeps out of the room with an escort of two Priests, leaving them to the tender care of Kenryk – who is itching to march them off to the Containment Area at the slightest sign of treachery, real or imagined.

Kenryk will also try to keep the characters away from the hatchway through which Jobyn entered the room. Somebody might be able to slip down there but his absence would be noticed within seconds. Alternatively, a good bluff might do the trick.

Beneath the Main Temple Area, a ladder leads down into the frigid depths of the top-shaped station. It passes between bulky engine casings, battered gyroscopes and a series of metal mesh inspection gantries – upon which, spread across various levels, lie a total of six large, humanoid figures shrouded in black cloths.

They are Cybermen. Real Cybermen, this time. Dead Cybermen.

They have been blown apart from within. Their cases are blackened, some of them have been dismembered or decapitated – but the Priests have taken care to reassemble their bodies as best they could before laying them down here to rest.

So now, at last, the characters know what the Priests have been concealing from their own people, the truth that Kenryk no longer sees any point in denying: that the reason their gods didn't meet them in Paradise is that they were already dead.

THE CONTAINMENT AREA

The characters may end up here after their meeting with High Priest Jobyn (see above). In addition, any groups of characters taken prisoner after the first – or recaptured after escaping – will skip that meeting and be brought straight here.

This is a circular room, divided down the middle by a force field. The field is almost invisible, betrayed by only a slight ripple effect in the air. The Priests keep their prisoners on one side of this field, as did the Cybermen before them; the only doorway into the room is on the other. Anyone touching the force field will receive a

jolt of energy, which, while painful, won't do any lasting harm. Anyone who grits his teeth and just tries to walk through it will take 3 points of damage and be flung back to where he came from.

The force field controls are on a wall just inside the door but are fingerprint-sensitive and can only be operated by a Priest (otherwise it's an Ingenuity and Technology roll, **Difficulty 21** with some appropriate equipment to bypass). There is no permanent guard – the Priests consider the force field security enough – but Priests will pass by this room regularly and sometimes check in on their prisoners.

If, somehow, all the characters ended up in the Great Temple without meeting Nethyn (see Act 1), or if they left him outside, then he will be brought here too. He has been heard spreading sedition, expressing the hope that the newly-arrived strangers might end the Priests' rule in Paradise. He can be a fellow prisoner with the characters or, if they are all at large, they might just stumble upon this area and find him here.

Nethyn has been told that the High Priest is too busy to pass judgement upon him at present. He expects that he, and any fellow prisoners, will be 'cast out of Paradise'. He isn't sure what this means. They might be returned to Yedias; Nethyn might even find Arkyll there. More likely, he thinks, they will be secretly executed.

A character (and, at most, one assistant) may be able to talk his way back to the Main Temple Area, if he can persuade a Priest that he is ready and able to do some good there. However, High Priest Jobyn will still be 'indisposed' and he will have to deal with the more sceptical Kenryk instead.

If the characters examine the wall of their cell, they may find (Awareness and Ingenuity, **Difficulty 15**) a tiny hole through which a camera lens is observing them. They can pry open a wall panel, pull out the camera (it isn't working) and cannibalise it for some Jiggery-Pokery.

Should all else fail, and the characters find themselves stuck here, then it's time to break out the Story Points. If they can stump up 3 between them, the lights will dim and the force field will sputter out for a few seconds. Somebody is up to something big, elsewhere in the space station (see The Conversion Chamber, opposite), causing a temporary power drain...

THE RECOVERY ROOM

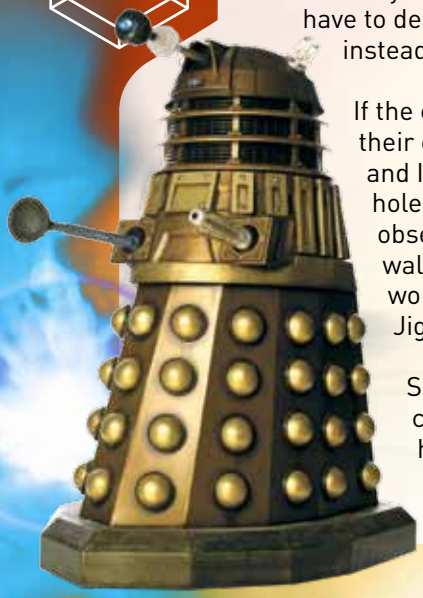
A set of double doors opens into a long rectangular room. The walls are lined with trolleys, ten to each side, six of which bear Yedarians, lying under clean white sheets. There is no machinery in here, no medical supplies, no indication that anyone is being treated at all.

The patients all have the same symptoms. They are feverish, with light purple rashes on their skin, and are sleeping fitfully. Before the characters can examine more than one of them, however, a patient at the far end of the room will sit up and ask, a little groggily, if they have come to take him away. If Nethyn is present, he will identify the patients' condition as the Blight (see p.6), and the talkative patient as a casual acquaintance named Malkyn. He will rush down the room to Malkyn's side.

Malkyn was brought here by the Priests three weeks ago, when he started to sicken. He thought they were going to cast him out of Paradise, although he doesn't know what he did wrong. Instead, he was left in this room until, to his surprise, he began to recover. His illness has all but run its course now and, although Malkyn is still a little flushed, his stats have returned to normal.

Breathlessly, Nethyn asks Malkyn if he has seen his best friend, Arkyll. Malkyn confirms that he has. Arkyll was a fellow patient, who also recovered from his illness and was taken from this room by the Priests just a short time ago.

Further questioning of Malkyn will reveal that, in fact, Arkyll was just one of ten perfectly healthy Yedarians who were taken away earlier today. If the characters think about it, they should be able to work out that this happened not along after they arrived in Paradise. Malkyn has no idea where the other patients went; he had hoped



they would be allowed to return to their tents. Malkyn will be reluctant to defy the Priests by leaving this room, although he can be persuaded. Four of the other five patients are incapable of leaving, their Strength and Resolve scores reduced to 0 by the Blight.

The fifth, however, has a secret.

At a cursory glance, the third nearest patient to the doors (about halfway down the room on the left) looks no different to the others. His sheets are pulled up to his chin and he appears to be asleep.

Should the characters inspect him more closely, however, he will wake up, fling back his bed sheets and leap from his trolley to threaten them. If the characters pass this patient's trolley without examining him, perhaps to speak to Malkyn, then they'll find themselves in even more trouble. At some point during their conversation with Malkyn – pick the most dramatic moment – the patient will wake as above. And now he will be standing between the characters and the exit!

Malkyn knows that this patient's name is Atalyn and that he was taken from this room three days ago and returned a few hours later. Atalyn has been silent since then and Malkyn had no idea what had happened to him – until now.

Atalyn still has the head of a Yedarian male – but the right side of his body is encased in a Cyberman's armour. He screams at the characters, "*You have no business in here. You are not like us. Delete! Delete!*" He lurches towards them, sparks flying from his right shoulder and knee joints. His un-armoured left arm hangs limply by his side and his left foot drags behind him. He carries no weapon – but as he grabs a trolley beside him to steady himself, its iron rail is crushed beneath his strong, armoured fingers.

Atalyn is the victim of a botched Cyber-conversion. His mind has been all but destroyed; all he can think of is destroying the intruders. He will pursue them out of the Recovery Room, if necessary. Slow though he is, he will make enough noise to attract the attention of nearby Priests. He is a clumsy fighter, flailing half-blindly – but woe betide anyone he does manage to get his hands on!

Atalyn can't be reasoned with, although he can be confused. No science can reverse what has been done to him – the only way to stop him is to destroy him. If the characters can't do this, if they run from him instead, then Atalyn will continue to search for them. He may turn up again when they least expect it.

THE CONVERSION CHAMBER

A large, circular chamber at the space station's heart. It is accessible by six sturdy metal doors, one at the end of each of the six radial corridors.

The timing of the characters' arrival here is important, as this is where all the threads of the story come together for the big finale. Before they enter the Conversion Chamber, they should have seen most, or all, of the rest of the space station. Should they approach too soon, stave them off with a patrol of Priests or tell them that the door to which they have come is deadlock sealed (they will have to back up to the innermost circular corridor and move around to the next radial corridor to find another).

If, however, the adventure is starting to slow, then this is the best place to kick-start it. Nethyn could insist on coming here, especially if he has seen the Recovery Room and started to work out where Arkyll might be. A Priest who discovers the characters may let slip with a pretty obvious hint such as, "We mustn't let them reach the central chamber, not now!" or the characters' aimless wanderings might just lead them here.

The Conversion Chamber has a higher ceiling than the station's other areas. It is also colder; the temperature is only a degree or so above freezing. The chamber is lined with large, human-shaped caskets, like sarcophagi, set into its walls. There are three rows of these, the upper two accessible by ladders that run from beside each of the six doors up to two circular gantries. There are ninety such caskets altogether, thirty on each level.

A semi-circular bank of controls sits in the centre of the room. Behind this is a freestanding archway, which Nethyn will recognise as the portal through which he came to Paradise. With

an Ingenuity and Technology roll (**Difficulty 15**), adjusted for Technology Level 7, the characters will understand it to be a trans-mat terminal.

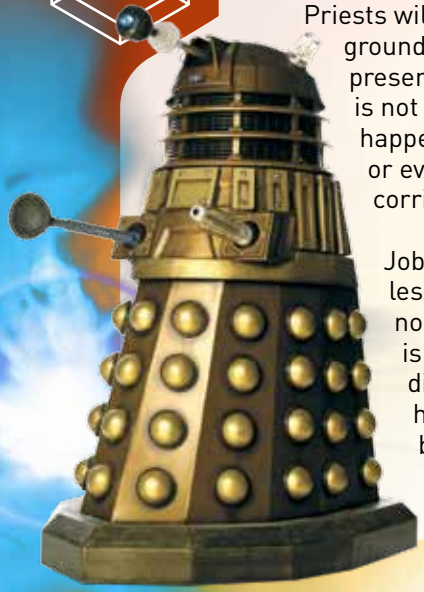
By the time the characters enter this room, High Priest Jobyn should be here. There are also eight Priests present, three working frantically at the central controls – which, unlike those in the Main Temple Area, are alive with lights and displays. The others are watching these three anxiously, their gazes flickering from them to a particular row of ten caskets at ground level. The caskets' lids are made of a frosted glass-like substance but an Awareness and Ingenuity roll (**Difficulty 12**) will discern that these ten are occupied by humanoid figures.

"We're losing another of them, High Priest," cries one of the Priests at the controls. *"His life signs… fading… He's gone. That… that was the second."*

"Then eight are still alive," says Jobyn. *"No one has ever survived this long before. It is working. The conversion process is working! We are taking what the gods could not give us. We are making ourselves like them!"*

During this vital phase of their operation, Jobyn and his Priests will be hugely distracted. It will take only a modicum of care for the characters to remain concealed in a doorway and watch what happens.

Far better, though, to place them at the heart of events, if possible. A heroic character might break cover at this point, desperate to stop Jobyn somehow. Failing this, you could have Nethyn race into the chamber, screaming that one of the figures in the caskets must be Arkyll. Two Priests will tackle him and bear him to the ground, while the characters will find their presence exposed. If they run, or if Nethyn is not around to make the above scenario happen, simply have two armed Priests, or even the crazed Atalyn, come up the corridor behind the characters.



Jobyn, at this point, couldn't care less about any prisoners. They are no longer a threat to his plans. He is, however, happy to gloat in their direction. Jobyn intends to convert his people into Cybermen. He believes it is the only way that they can survive in Paradise once the atmospheric bubble collapses – and he may be right. But anyone familiar with the Cybermen will know that the cost of survival, in this case, is far, far too high.

Previous attempts by the Priests to use the machinery in this chamber have failed. Atalyn (see the Recovery Room) is a by-product of one such failure. Nevertheless, the characters' arrival in Paradise spooked Jobyn into acting precipitously. He took ten Yedarians from the Recovery Room and attempted to convert all of them at once.

"The old gods failed us," says Jobyn. *"They died. But we can take their place. My people will be the new gods – and I will be their Most High, their All-Father."*

Even if the characters can talk some sense into him, or somehow get to the controls, it is too late. The conversion process is in its final stages. Nothing can stop it now. The lids of eight of the ten occupied caskets fly open and eight fully-processed, fully-armed Cybermen emerge.

Jobyn has saved his people. Or so he thinks.

"Do you remember me?" he asks of his newly-built Cybermen. *"I am your High Priest. I am your saviour, the saviour of our entire race. I am your leader."* The Cybermen seem to recognise him, and obey him.

At Jobyn's bidding, the eight silver giants march in perfect unison to join him in the centre of the room. At which point, he orders them to kill the intruders…

"No," says one of the Cybermen, in its cold, emotionless voice. *"You are not our leader."* And all eight Cybermen bring up their guns and fire – Jobyn screams, and dies, as a few of their shots penetrate his purloined armour.

A Cyberman rounds on the horrified Priests. *"You have been identified as Yedarians,"* it says. *"An inferior species, but suitable for conversion."*

"You are not like us," says another, *"but you will become like us."* And the Cybermen set about seizing the Priests, one by one, and dragging them towards the conversion caskets.

ACT 3 – TO THE SLAUGHTER

The characters have the chance to escape now, while the Cybermen are busy with the Priests. They should probably take it. Once all the Priests have been sealed into caskets, two Cybermen will remain behind while the other six head out of the Conversion Chamber in search of fresh prey. Four of them will find it in the corridors of the 'Great Temple'; two will step outside into the Yedarians' Paradise, causing an uproar.

Many of the Yedarians will be overjoyed to see that their gods have returned. Others will be afraid. Some will run from the Cybermen, while others throw themselves at their feet and beg to be taken by them. Some of the former will be chopped (but not shot) down without mercy and hauled away, while some of the latter are swept aside with brutal force, brutal enough to shake the faith of many.

Each Cyberman will seize the two most convenient targets, return to the Conversion Chamber with them, bundle them into caskets and head out again. They don't care what order they take their prisoners in – there's nowhere for them to run to, anyway – so the characters shouldn't have too much of a problem keeping out of their clutches for a while, if this is what they are trying to do. Any character who is captured will find themselves in a casket. As soon as that frosted lid slams shut, they will be pinned, unable to move a muscle, to do anything but wait.

Amid this chaos, the characters will find one unexpected ally. When he saw what was happening to his fellow Priests, Kenryk fled from the Conversion Chamber. He took a different exit to the characters but he will soon run into them.

For all his past bluster, the last thing Kenryk wants is to become a Cyberman – he knows only too well what this entails, having witnessed Jobyn's failed experiments. And, in case the characters haven't put it all together yet, Kenryk has worked out that this was the Cybermen's plan all along...

"That's why they created Paradise for us before they died," he wails, *"why they ensured that we could survive here – not for our sake, but for their own. They knew that, given enough time, we would walk into their trap. We would sacrifice ourselves to bring about their rebirth."*

DEFEATING THE CYBERMEN

Eight Cybermen may not sound like a lot but taking them down won't be easy – and there's a time limit.

Once all ninety caskets in the Conversion Chamber have been filled, the conversion process will begin and ninety new Cybermen will be born – some of them perhaps from the remains of captured characters – and the situation will be truly hopeless.

Kenryk can help, taking the characters to a hidden weapons locker inside the space station or just taking particle guns off frightened Priests. These will give the characters a fighting chance but a small one. It will take a Fantastic hit from one of these guns (12 points) to penetrate the Cybermen's armour and do a mere 2 points of damage.

What's more, the Cybermen will respond to any attack upon them with lethal force – although a cornered or injured character might buy some time by throwing down his gun, in which case he'll be hauled off to the Conversion Chamber instead. The characters have the run of the space station and its surroundings; they can even get back to their own TARDIS. So, they will have access to all the equipment necessary to create any Gadget they can conceive.

There is, however, a way to beat the Cybermen without firing a shot.

The systems in the Main Temple Area contain a virus that is known to destroy them. The key is to upload it into their networked brains. With an Ingenuity and Technology roll (**Difficulty 18**, adjusted, as always, for TL 7), a character can identify all the packets of data that make up the complex virus and download it into a suitable device, or even directly into the head of an incapacitated but still living Cyberman (another Ingenuity and Technology roll at **Difficulty 18** to work out how).

This process will take several minutes and a Bad or Disastrous result will signify that the virus has leaked into the systems that maintain the atmospheric bubble, beginning a countdown of mere seconds to its collapse. Let's the hope the characters have a few Story Points in reserve!

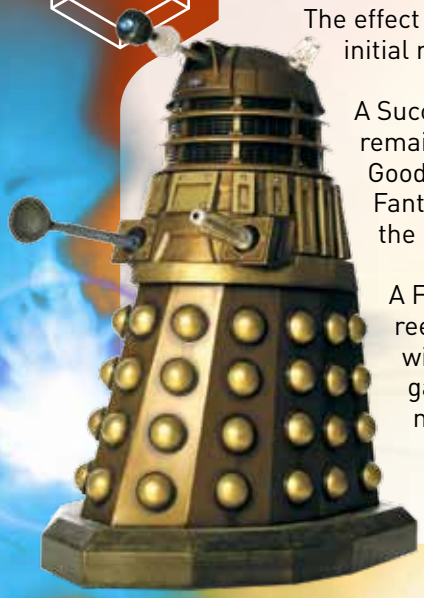
Nor will the Cybermen sit idly by once they sense that their systems have been hacked into. All but the two guards in the Conversion Chamber will come stomping towards the Main Temple Area, determined to neutralise the threat. They'll need to be held off somehow until the virus finishes downloading.

To transmit the downloaded virus to the Cybermen, the characters will need an access code, which they can obtain from the space station's systems with an Ingenuity and Technology roll, **Difficulty 21**. Or, if you want to make things a bit tougher for them, tell them they can only get this information from the console in the Conversion Chamber!

The effect of the virus will depend on the initial roll made to download it.

A Success will destroy a third of the remaining Cybermen (round up); a Good result two-thirds (round down); a Fantastic result will blow the heads off the lot of them.

A Failure will leave all the Cybermen reeling but only for a few seconds. This will give the characters a chance to gain the initiative over them but not much more than that.



If the characters are struggling at this point, you could whittle down the odds against them by having a couple of Cybermen damaged or killed by resisting Priests.

You could also have one of the Cybermen hesitate when it sees Nethyn, the memory of the man he used to be struggling with his new Cyber-programming. This is, of course, Nethyn's best friend, Arkyll, and the results of his inner conflict can be as extreme as you like – or rather, as extreme as the characters can afford to pay for with Story Points. A few seconds' confusion might allow a character to escape death; a full-fledged freak-out could see Arkyll self-destructing and perhaps even taking another Cyberman with him.

EPILOGUE

In the aftermath of the Cyberman's rampage, the Yedarians will be confused and distraught. As far as most of them are concerned, their gods have just died – even if those gods weren't behaving exactly as advertised.

Only a few – such as Nethyn, if he is still alive, his fellow Malcontents, Kenryk and maybe a few more Priests who began to suspect the truth about the Cybermen long ago – will be capable of pulling themselves together and looking to the future. And even they may need a little chivvying.

Of course, if the Yedarians are to have a future at all, they must escape from this planetoid before the atmospheric bubble around the space station collapses. Evacuation by TARDIS is possible – but, for almost fifteen hundred people, it's a less than ideal solution. The Yedarians can, however, be sent home to Yedaris, using the trans-mat device in the Conversion Chamber.

The Priests believe that this terminal works only one way. They're wrong. The dying crew of the Cyber-space station sabotaged it, to ensure that any Yedarians arriving here in their absence had no escape route – but an Ingenuity and Technology roll (**Difficulty 15**, modified by TL 7) can reverse the damage.

Nethyn or Kenryk can then supervise the evacuation of Paradise, marshalling their fellows through the trans-mat portal and ensuring that, once they have all returned to Yedias, the portal there is destroyed.

The Yedarians are going home. Once there, they will have a great deal to think about. The characters, meanwhile, can resume their travels, secure in the knowledge that not only have they saved hundreds of lives today but they have also prevented the rebirth of one of the greatest evils ever to stalk this universe or any other.

YEDARIAN PRIEST

Awareness 2 Coordination 3 Ingenuity 3
Presence 4 Resolve 4 Strength 3

Traits: Attractive
By the book
Indomitable
Obligation (Major) - Serve the Silver Gods.
Voice of Authority

Weapon - Cyberman Particle Gun L (4/L/L)

Skills: Athletics 2, Convince 4, Fighting 1, Marksman 2, Subterfuge 1, Survival 2

Story Points: 2-4

HIGH PRIEST JOBYN

Awareness 2 Coordination 3 Ingenuity 3
Presence 4 Resolve 4 Strength 3

Traits: Attractive
By the book
Indomitable
Obligation (Major) - Serve the Silver Gods.
Slow - Effective Speed of 1.
Voice of Authority

Weapon - Cyberman Particle Gun L (4/L/L)

Skills: Athletics 2, Convince 4, Fighting 1, Marksman 2, Subterfuge 1, Survival 2

Story Points: 4-6

GENERIC YEDARIAN

Awareness 1 Coordination 3 Ingenuity 1
Presence 2 Resolve 3 Strength 3

Traits: Attractive
Code of Conduct (Major) - Obey the laws of the Silver Gods.
Obligation (Major) - Serve the Silver Gods.
Technically Inept

Skills: Athletics 2, Convince 2, Survival 2

Story Points: 1-2

YEDARIAN MALCONTENT

Awareness 2 Coordination 3 Ingenuity 2
Presence 2 Resolve 4 Strength 3

Traits: Attractive
Code of Conduct (Minor) - Obey the laws of the Silver Gods.
Technically Inept

Weapon - Knife (Strength +2)

Skills: Athletics 2, Convince 2, Fighting 1, Subterfuge 2, Survival 2

Story Points: 1-2

ATALYN (HALF-CYBERMAN)

Awareness 1 Coordination 2 Ingenuity 1
Presence 3 Resolve 3 Strength 5

Traits:
Armour - As Cyberman, reduces damage by 10. However, as Atalyn's armour only covers half his body, it can be bypassed by a Good or better attack roll against him.
Cyborg (Major)
Fear Factor (1) - Gains +2 to actively scare.

Skills: Fighting 2

Story Points: 3-5

For Cyberman statistics, see p.20 of Aliens and Creatures.

THE ROSETTA PLAGUE

by Alasdair Stuart

SYNOPSIS

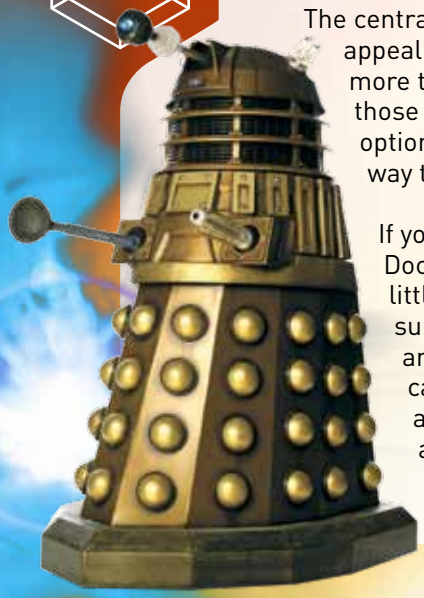
The TARDIS arrives on the **TAS Thoth**, a Torchwood Archive ship on a survey mission to the Ashen Stars. An area of space legendary for never having been home to life of any kind, the Ashen Stars is a stellar nursery whose massive solar winds obscure any attempts at scanning from outside. It is also a region at the centre of political tension, as it acts as a border between Krillitane and Raxacoricofallapatorian space. The crew of the Thoth have been picked in an effort to ease tensions, with both races equally represented.

But something has gone horribly wrong. The characters arrive to find the ship quarantined on every level, with a disease running rampant through the crew. Despite the crew's best efforts, led by Captain Zack Cross Flane from Sanctuary Base Six, the disease is still spreading and the ship is under Torchwood Protocol One. Once 90 per cent of the crew are infected, it will self destruct. With time running out, the Doctor and his friends must find the cure before the ship is destroyed.

GAMEMASTER'S INTRODUCTION

The central idea of this adventure should appeal to groups who like solving problems more than those who like teleporting those problems into the sun. There are options to handle the adventure either way though, which are detailed later on.

If your group is not playing as the Doctor and companions, it only takes a little tweaking to make this adventure suitable to any group, so long as they are capable of interstellar travel. This can be by ship or teleport, though the adventure is probably best suited to arriving by TARDIS.



CHAPTER ONE: OLD FRIENDS, NEW PROBLEMS

"The TAS Thoth! Sounds like a musical, looks like a music hall! I thank you!" The Doctor throws the TARDIS doors open and leads you out onto a wide open, brightly lit hall. It's two storeys tall, forty metres wide and, apart from two lifts, is made entirely of glass. Outside the hall, you can see dense vegetation. A symbol, a 'T' made of hexagonal cells, is engraved on the glass.

"Torchwood." There's something old and dark in the Doctor's voice as he speaks. "They're doing good work in this time period, to be fair. Lots of archiving, lots of research. None of that imperialist, if it's alien it's ours, nonsense from the 21st Century." He breathes in, looks up and smiles. "No, here, all they're concerned with is the endless, complex tapestry of hist-Oh."

Running towards you, arms waving, teeth bared, are a variety of aliens. Each one looks furious, each one is brandishing a weapon and each one is screaming one word over and over again.

'DEATH! DEATH! DEAAAAAAAAAAATH!'

There are a number of ways your group are likely to respond to this situation.

FIGHT

If your group are feeling plucky, and actually want to face down an apparently rabid group of aliens, the stats are on the next page. This is actually a more narratively useful option than you might think as, in the course of combat, three things become clear, either through Awareness and Ingenuity rolls (Difficulty 15) or good roleplaying:

- The aliens aren't concerned with killing the characters. They're concerned with keeping them from entering the rest of the ship.

- The constant screaming of "Death!" is worrying but isn't actually a battle cry. The aliens can't use any other word but each is attempting to place different emphases on it. It's as though they're forming coherent sentences but can only use one word in those sentences.

- Each fights exactly the same way, at times even fighting as a flock.

The aliens are charging the characters from all directions and some are between them and the lift doors. If the characters decide to fight their way out to the lifts, it's up to you how long they take to arrive once a character pushes the button and how long the doors take to close once everyone is inside. Desperately trying to push the aliens out of the lift doors so they can shut could make a suitably dramatic climax to the encounter!

If the players win, then go straight to **Chapter 2: Midnight for the God of Wisdom.** If they lose and are driven back into the TARDIS, go to **Chapter 4: The Firing Line.**

RUN

Fleeing back to the TARDIS is entirely possible and there are suggestions for different approaches to the adventure in **Chapter 4.** Alternately, you could have the radiation from the Ashen Stars throw the TARDIS off course and land it back in a different part of the Thoth or use Zack's appearance to keep the players onsite.

KRILLITANE

Awareness 4 Coordination 3 Ingenuity 4
Presence 3 Resolve 3 Strength 4

Traits: Alien
Alien Appearance
Natural Weapons (Teeth) - Gains +2 to Strength in damage.
Special - Steal Racial Traits.
Weakness (Major) - Krillitane Oil.

Weapon - Club 4 (2/4/6)

Armour - Torchwood Archive Field Uniforms which offer 1 point of protection.

Skills: Athletics 3, Fighting 3 (when not infected, they have similar Skill sets to their Krillitane ancestors, see p.57 of Aliens and Creatures).

Note: The Krillitane in this time period have changed dramatically from Brother Lassar's group at Deffry Vale. They are tall, slim and without wings. Their heads are large, with an enlarged cranium and large yellow eyes. Their skin is the same colour as Lassar's coven and they have smaller mouths - though these can stretch at times of stress to reveal large teeth like their cousins.

Story Points: 4-6

BLATHEREEN

Awareness 3 Coordination 3 Ingenuity 4
Presence 4 Resolve 5 Strength 8

Traits: Alien
Alien Appearance
Fear Factor (2) - Gains +4 to actively scare.
Natural Weapons (Claws) - Strength +2 as damage.
Weakness (Major) - Acetic acid.

Weapon - Electro prod 2 (2/4/6)

Armour - The crew are all wearing Torchwood Archive Field Uniforms which offer 1 point of protection.

Skills: Athletics 3, Fighting 3 (when not infected they have a similar Skill set to their Slitheen cousins, see p.72 of Aliens and Creatures)

Note: The real, pure Blathereen (not the half breeds that attempted to poison the Earth with Rakweed) are large and orange Raxacoricofallapatorians, similar to the Slitheen (see p.71 of Aliens and Creatures).

Story Points: 4-6

CLOMIAN

Awareness 4 Coordination 4 Ingenuity 4
Presence 3 Resolve 2 Strength 4

Traits: Alien
Alien Appearance
Fear Factor (1) - Gains +2 to actively scare.
Natural Weapons (Claws) - Strength +2 as damage.
Slow (smaller build means their effective Speed is reduced to 2).

Weapon - Club 4 (2/4/6)

Armour - The crew are all wearing Torchwood Archive Field Uniforms which offer 1 point of protection.

Skills
Athletics 3, Fighting 3 (when not infected, they have Convince 2, Fighting 1, Knowledge 3, Subterfuge 2, Survival 1, Technology 3, Transport 3.

Note: The natives of Clom are similar to the Raxacoricofallapatorians but are smaller in build and vary in appearance and colour like their cousins.

Story Points: 4-6

Captain Zachary Cross Flane, Action Hero

The third option is that, just as all seems lost, a cargo skimmer drops (not lands) onto the ground in front of them. The driver leans over and yells *"In! NOW!"*

If the players do so, they find themselves on what amounts to a flying flatbed truck, and are rattled around as the pilot pulls the vehicle straight up through the 'glass' dome into the Oxygen Garden, a forcefield hissing into place as the skimmer breaks through. Only then does he turn and allow himself a cautious smile.

"Fancy meeting you here. Funny thing is, we could use a Doctor"

ZACHARY CROSS FLANE

Awareness 3 Coordination 4 Ingenuity 4
Presence 3 Resolve 4 Strength 3

Traits:
Brave
Code of Conduct
Friends
Impulsive
Keen Senses
Voice of Authority

Weapon - Sword Str+2

Armour - Standard Torchwood Archive Field Uniform, which gives him 2 points of protection.

Skills: Athletics 4, Convince 2, Fighting 3, Medicine 1, Transport 4, Knowledge (Alien Cultures) 3, Knowledge (Alien History) 3, Technology 3, Marksman 1, Medicine 2

Story Points: 8

ZACK'S STORY

It's twenty years after the events at Krop Tor, and Zack, Danny and Ida, the only other survivors of Sanctuary Base Six, have all flourished. Danny left the Archive to work in Ood civil rights, Ida has been promoted to Captain and is currently leading an expedition to the Singing Tombs of Berlin and Zack took a position as the Captain of the Thoth on the Ashen Stars Expedition. The Ashen Stars are home to a hundred worlds, none of which have ever supported life. It's a prestigious expedition and Zack found real peace in accepting the responsibility of command. The Thoth became his home and the incredible people and stories that surrounded him finally soothed the nightmares that had plagued him since Krop Tor.

Three days ago, that changed. Three days ago, the Thoth reached its tenth world and its tenth set of identical results. Buried a mile under the surface of every planet, they found identical sarcophagi, each impervious to sensors, each with their own power supply and each a million years old. The find was already being hailed as one of the greatest in history by the time the expedition team made it back to the Thoth.

Twenty-four hours ago, every member of the Ashen Stars field team fell sick. By the time Zack quarantined the ship and sent a request for assistance, over half of them were unconscious.

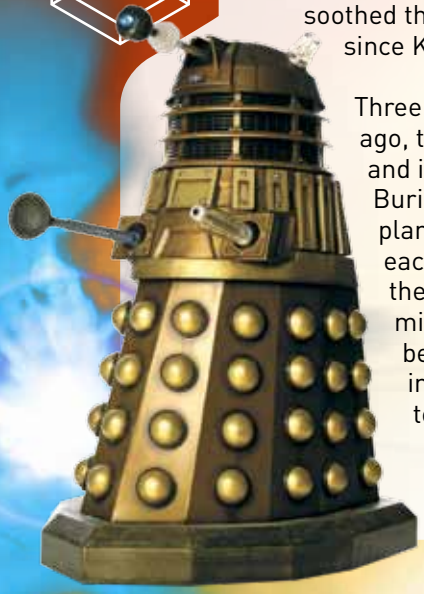
Twelve hours later, twenty of them woke up. Ten repeated the word 'Death', ten repeated the word 'nears'.

Six hours ago, the quarantine vessels arrived with orders to incinerate the Thoth if the disease wasn't cured inside 24 hours.

One hour ago, another twenty woke up. The first ten repeat the word 'for', the second ten repeat the word 'everyone'.

Zack and his crew are in trouble, the entire planet is in trouble and, somehow, the Doctor and his companions have to work out how to save them in less than eighteen hours. Unless, of course, they're infected too...

Zack presents an interesting problem in this scenario, as he's both an asset and a potential obstacle for the Gamemaster. After all, Zack can open every door on the Thoth. Here are a couple of suggestions on how to play him.



Zachary Cross Flane, Typhoid Mary

Zack is actually patient zero of the Rosetta Plague. His experience on Krop Tor altered him very slightly, giving the plague the foothold it needed to properly access his brain and its language centre. He knows exactly what he's doing and is planning on using the Doctor not to find a cure for the plague but a means of tripling everyone's dose in a desperate attempt to get a message across.

This Zack is essentially a bodysnatched double, a man who will do everything he can to help the players, right up until the point where they find themselves on the verge of curing the plague. Then he'll become a calm, implacable threat, explaining that the plague has to live, and his control of the ship suddenly becomes a problem. You can either play this version of Zack as a demented killer or as a tragic figure, depending on how you've approached the Rosetta Plague itself.

Zachary Cross Flane, Man of the People

You can always have Zack drop the characters where they want to be then rush off to deal with another problem. After all, the Thoth is starting to come apart at the seams and it would make sense for the senior officer to be out dealing with problems as they arise. Plus you can always have him make last minute saves if the players get into more trouble than they can handle.

Zachary Cross Flane, Victim

The other option is to have Zack as a non-infected character who teams up with the players, able to do the dull stuff like getting doors open and getting in contact with other teams as needed, until it's dramatically necessary for him to contract the disease. It's also a nice means of ramping up dramatic tension. You could even let one of the players direct his actions, in addition to them playing their own character.

Zachary Cross Flane, Player Character

Finally, you could also assign Zack to a player as their character for the duration of the adventure - especially if you have a new player to your group who doesn't already have a character to bring. You could use any of these options but allow the player to run Zack, even if he's patient zero. Zack's player would be the only one who knows his ulterior motive and, if the player runs Zack well without giving the game away and is able to out-think the other players in the final scenes, making him a truly tragic victim and hero, the player should be rewarded with additional Character or Story Points for their next character.

Regardless of how you approach Zack, or the crew members who attack the players, sooner or later they'll make their way into the ship and on to **Chapter Two**.

CHAPTER TWO: MIDNIGHT IN THE CITY OF WISDOM

Whether through Zack's efforts or their own, the players make their way out into the Thoth and find...nothing. The ship is large, brightly lit and clearly in excellent condition but there's absolutely no one around. Each room is locked (either Zack, or an Ingenuity and Technology roll (**Difficulty 21**) will unlock them) and the ship is incredibly quiet.

However, an Awareness and Ingenuity roll (**Difficulty 15**) (or some investigation and roleplaying) will reveal that, on a lower deck, something is being built. A further Awareness and Ingenuity roll (**Difficulty 18**) will reveal that a glyph has been scrawled at even distances around the ship. Anyone with Knowledge (Alien Language) can try to roll an Ingenuity and Knowledge roll (**Difficulty 21**) will work out that the glyph is a close but not exact, match to their language's equivalent of 'Rebirth'.

Whether you want to have the characters wander the halls of the Thoth for a while, or not, is up to you. Crank up the atmosphere, action or problem-solving depending on what's going to work best for your group. As they wander, here are a few encounters that will spice up their investigation and steer them on the right course:

THE SECOND GLYPH

At several locations around the ship, a second glyph has been carved. Another Ingenuity and Knowledge (Alien Language) roll (**Difficulty 21**) will reveal that the glyph translates most accurately to the word 'escape.'

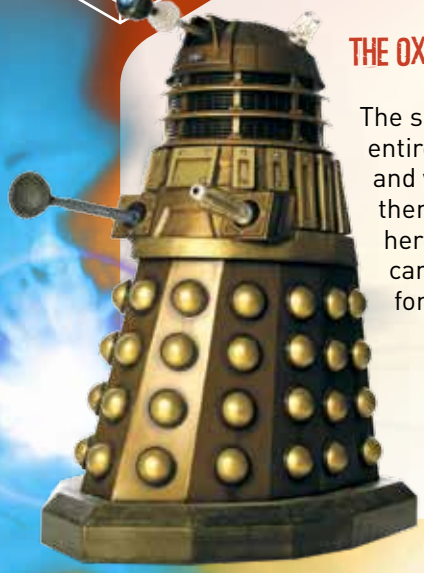
WAR OF OPPORTUNITY

The players turn a corner to find all-out war has erupted in the corridors of the Thoth. Doors have been blasted off their hinges and groups of Clomian and Blathereen are engaged in pitched combat with one another.

Looking closely, or an Awareness and Ingenuity roll (**Difficulty 18**), will reveal that neither of the groups appear to be infected. Instead, they've taken the opportunity presented by the situation to revive old feuds. Alternatively, you could have the fight suddenly disturbed as a plague victim appears.

THE OLDEST PATIENT

A Krillitane crew member, Ashko, is the oldest being on board. He's old enough to remember the Krillitane's earlier genotype and, as a result, he's a little more compatible with the plague than the other crew members. Ashko has been infected but he's able to communicate the first half of the message, giving the players more of a hint about what's going on.



THE OXYGEN GARDEN

The ships' oxygen garden occupies an entire level and is crammed with plants and wildlife chosen to help maintain them. A couple of plague victims are here, intoxicated by the fact that they can breathe and move and feel again for the first time in centuries.

THE LAB

Eventually, the players will be directed by Zack or make their own way to one of the ship's medical labs. You can either have Zack with them, have a couple of NPC doctors quarantined in the lab or have them alone, depending on how you want to play it. The lab is full of state-of-the-art diagnostic and medical equipment as well as samples of the plague victims' blood and an experimental clone facility, able to weave a copy of a crewmember's organs inside two minutes of being given a sample.

Things The Players Can Learn

-The lab gives them full access to the ship's computer, meaning the players have full access to the ship's layout (the map that came in the box), the details of the Ashen Stars and the location of known plague victims out in the corridors. An Ingenuity and Technology roll (**Difficulty 25** - remember to adjust for the Tech Level, the ship is Tech Level 8) will also allow the players to open or close specific doors in the ship.
- The plague is unusually complex for a virus and appears to have a detailed, coherent structure. An Ingenuity and Medicine roll (**Difficulty 18**) will reveal the structure is more than a little similar to the way brain cells connect to each other.
- The plague heads directly for the language centre of the brain yet isn't entirely compatible with it.
- The plague is evolving, becoming progressively more complex and infecting victims faster.
- The plague is airborne. Tests run on the air in the lab will reveal it's present there too and is feeding in from the central oxygen distribution system.
- The plague reacts positively to races with malleable genetic structures. It appears to infect psychic races at twice the normal speed. If you're running the Doctor as an NPC, you could always use this to knock him out for dramatic effect. Alternately, if the Doctor is a player's character you could use this as a means of dumping all the information into his brain and upping the tension as time begins to run out.
- The plague uses the pheromone system of its victims to communicate.

THE HALL OF SARCOPHAGI

The Sarcophagi recovered by the Thoth are all being kept in cargo hold 1. There are over two hundred of them, and a group of plague victims are working on opening the sarcophagi and hooking them up to the oxygen system. They will attempt to fight off the players if they are attacked directly but, again, will attempt to do so in a non-lethal manner.

Anyone spending more than two Rounds in the hall will have to make Strength and Resolve rolls (**Difficulty 21**) to not succumb to the plague. Assuming they're wearing protective clothing and make it past the guards, the Sarcophagi can be disconnected by the players with an Ingenuity and Technology roll (**Difficulty 15**).

THE ENGINE ROOM

The Engine Room aboard the Thoth runs the length of the ship and is filled with both its engines and the ship's reactor core. There are plague victims here too but they're acting in an odd way, fearful and cautious of getting too close to the engines. Characters who pay close attention to their movements can see that they seem actively afraid of the engines and are trying to work out how to turn them off.

THE COMPUTER CORE

The ship's computer core is located beneath the bridge. Its onboard AI has been partially lobotomised by plague victims and takes an Ingenuity and Technology roll to repair (**Difficulty 21** - remember to adjust for the Tech Level, the ship is Tech Level 8). Once fully repaired, if the players have been making swift work of the adventure so far, it could activate ship wide security systems that would make the players lives a lot more difficult. Alternatively, once it's online the players could use the computer to speed up analysis of the plague (Ingenuity and Technology roll, **Difficulty 9**) or to reveal the information about the Ashen Stars.

A further option is to take the computer even further offline (Ingenuity and Technology roll, **Difficulty 24**) to circumvent the nuclear sterilisation under Torchwood Protocol One.

THE BRIDGE

There are five crew members present on the bridge (this is also where Zack will head for) and they act completely differently to the others. Each is still at their post, still trying to do their jobs as the virus isn't quite compatible enough with their systems. They will plead for help from the characters when they arrive and seem particularly fixated on the ship's controls. They are paying particularly close attention to the navigation sensors. An Ingenuity and Technology roll (**Difficulty 15**) using the sensors (don't forget to modify for Tech Level) will reveal that the ambient radiation in the Ashen Stars region is increasing and has doubled since the Thoth first entered the region. Another Ingenuity and Technology or Knowledge (Astronomy) roll (**Difficulty 18**) will reveal that the region will fall victim to a chain supernova within the next four hours – though this can be adjusted by the Gamemaster to heighten the drama.

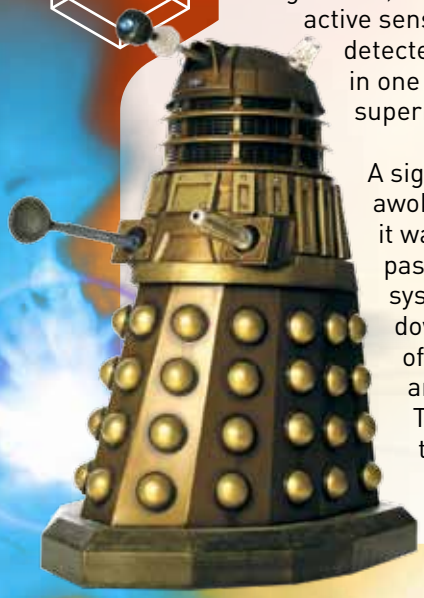
CHAPTER THREE: THE ROSETTA PLAGUE

The Ashen Stars were home to one of the universe's first civilisations, a race that evolved, thrived and died before almost every other race came into existence. They were artisans and scientists and, in the end, they fell victim to the one thing they couldn't prevent: chance. A string of supernovas tore through the region, the radiation destroying everything it touched.

The Artisans survived by taking a step backwards, dispersing their consciousness into a vast collection of bacteria and single-celled organisms, viruses and germs. Billions of individuals joined forever in group consciousnesses, each one entombed in protective sarcophagi buried a mile under the surface of their worlds. They would never be the same again but they would, at least, live.

Centuries passed and the Rosetta Plague and the catastrophe that led to its creation were both long forgotten. As time went by, the Blathereen, the Clom and the Krillitane all rose to power in the area. The Rosetta Plague slept beneath the surface of its worlds and, while the three races regularly surveyed the area, they only ever found hints and fragments of their predecessors. Some elements of the Krillitane may even have used their story as inspiration for their years of genetic piracy.

That changed two years before the Thoth arrived. The Ashen Stars are a stellar nursery, an area where stars are born grow and die over and over again and, at the far edge of the region, the last active sensor on a derelict monitoring station detected a small, but increasing instability in one of the region's stars. The chain supernova was building again.



A signal was sent, the Rosetta Plague awoke and, to its horror, discovered it was powerless; too much time had passed and every one of their warning systems had decayed and broken down. The stellar nursery at the heart of the Ashen Stars was active again and it was just as unstable as before. Their worlds would die, again, and they were powerless to stop it.

Then the Thoth arrived and the Rosetta Plague saw its chance. It infected the field team that retrieved it and tried to warn them what was coming. Even then, they were cheated. Too much time had passed, their bacterial carrier had evolved and split so many times that they could barely communicate. They needed more hosts, they needed the other sarcophagi opened. Because time was running out.

The Rosetta Plague's Message

The Rosetta Plague is trying to use its victims to warn the crew of the Thoth to get out of the area. However, because it's such an old species it's having trouble using their vocal chords. The message it's actually trying to communicate is:

"Death nears for everyone. Leave now or burn in the solar forge forever."

Roleplaying the Rosetta Plague

The Rosetta Plague can be played one of three ways, all of which are detailed below. If you decide to infect characters with it (and what better way is there to raise the stakes?), then once the victim comes round, give the player the following notes on how to play their character.

-You want everyone to leave.
-Everyone is in terrible danger.
-You have to leave the area and if you can't get people to leave, you need to leave yourself.
-You can still speak but can only use one word from the message.

Anyone infected also automatically gains 2 levels in Fighting and an additional level in Awareness.

The Rosetta Plague as Villain

The nastiest way to play the Plague is simple: trapped in a dispersed intelligence, the Artisans have gone insane and are intent on dying and taking as many people as they can with them. Done this way, you have to change the way the infected act a little but it still works and turns

the adventure into a far darker story. Plus, this way the Doctor gets the opportunity to pull a last minute save and convince an entire race to live.

The Rosetta Plague as Hero

The Rosetta Plague is everything good about the Artisans distilled into a bacterial medium. It's desperate and will take any action in order to escape the destruction that's coming and, if your players are slow on the uptake, there's always ways of getting them on the right track. Maybe a plague victim saves one of them from being blown out into space, or uses sign language to communicate their message. Either way, the plague should be threatening but a little complex, an intelligence that can't quite communicate.

The Rosetta Plague as the Missing Link

If you are so inclined, you could use the Rosetta Plague as a means of connecting the Krillitane, Blathereen and Clom. Perhaps all three races are descended from the Artisans and the plague fills a hole in their DNA, allowing the Krillitane to adapt without killing, the Clom to gain further control over their escaped genetic weapons (like the Absorbaloff) and the Blathereen the ability to alter their mass more easily. In essence, in this instance the Rosetta Plague is the missing link, a common ancestor that allows all three races to reach their potential. You could even use this version as a last minute escape if the players are having difficulty working out what is going on by using a member of one of those races as the first patient to successfully communicate the complete message.

CURING THE ROSETTA PLAGUE

When it comes down to it, the plague has to be cured and, for it to be cured, the message has to be fully communicated. There are plenty of ways to do this, some of which follow:

The Doctor is the Last Patient

Time Lords are sufficiently old and compatible that the Doctor can absorb and repeat the entire message. As discussed previously, you can use this as a way of explaining what's going on if you want to move the plot along or a means of taking a non-player character Doctor off the stage for a while. Either way, once he gets the message, the plague instantly goes dormant in the other victims and you can have the players race to the bridge to turn the ship around before the Ashen Stars go nova.

Releasing the plague

One of the other options is to get the plague to saturation point. Opening the Sarcophagi or super charging the oxygen distribution system (Ingenuity and Technology roll **Difficulty 18**) will saturate the ship with the plague and ensure that the message is transmitted, albeit through multiple voices. If you go for this option, characters must make Ingenuity and Resolve rolls (**Difficulty 15**) at regular intervals to be able to do act independently of the Plague's wishes.

Legion

A series of Ingenuity and Technology or Ingenuity and Medicine rolls (**Difficulty 15 to 25**, depending upon which part of the procedure they are attempting) will allow the players to grow a whole 'Tabula Rasa' body at the clone bank in the lab. Without a personality or memories of its own, this is the perfect host for the plague, allowing it to communicate its message and also paving the way for some interesting exploration of clone rights. After all, how do you re-house an entire civilisation contained in one body?

Forced Hibernation

The Rosetta Plague fears radiation on a primal level. By extending the TARDIS' Artron field (a series of Ingenuity and Technology rolls by a skilled TARDIS operator) everyone onboard will be knocked out as the plague goes into hibernation.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE FIRING LINE

If the players run away at the start of the scenario, here are a couple of possible different approaches to the adventure.

The Furious Engine

A Raxacoricofallapatorian ship assigned to bring new crewmembers to the Thoth, the Furious Engine has been standing off ever since Zack sounded the contagion alarm. The crew is fearful not only of the plague but the region itself but can, with either Presence and Convince rolls or good roleplaying, be persuaded to help out.

The Sisters of the Alpha Genotype

The Sisters of the Alpha Genotype are a splinter group of Krillitane who have long since given up on their race's genetic thievery. They have dedicated themselves to finding and preserving the original Krillitane genotype and restoring it to those members of their race who want to return to what they see as a pure, sinless state.

The Sisters have a refuge in the Ashen Stars, an incredibly heavily shielded orbital chapel that the Thoth made contact with some time ago. They are eager to help, especially when the characters mention the Rosetta Plague and they can also be used to tell the players about the danger the Ashen Stars present. Plus getting their chapel ready to fly as a means of getting back aboard the Thoth should make for a fun interlude.

ESCAPING FROM THE ASHEN STARS

Once the plague is cured and the danger successfully communicated, getting the Thoth out of the Ashen Stars can be as easy or hard as you like. There's plenty of scope for frantic last minute fixes, fanatical members of alien races trying to destroy the ship to settle old scores or old technology waking up and mistaking the Thoth as a threat. Whichever route you take, the chain supernova is spectacular when it happens, especially if your characters are surfing the shockwave a light second ahead of it.

Zachary Cross Flane, First Ambassador to the Ashen Stars

Once the ship is back on its feet, Zack and his crew find themselves with quite an opportunity. The radiation will die down to a survivable level very quickly, although the Thoth is told to stand down until it can be relieved by a ship better designed to operate in such a region. Regardless, the Rosetta Plague are only interested in negotiating with Zack so, by the time the players leave, the Thoth has become the first embassy in the history of the Ashen Stars.

The Rosetta Plague reborn

Whether your players opted for the clone option, keeping the Rosetta plague as a virus or something much more unusual, they also present an interesting problem. After all, there are plenty more sarcophagi to retrieve once the radiation has died down to say nothing of a spectacularly old, advanced galactic civilisation to re-home. If only your characters knew a Time Lord with a dimensionally transcendental space and time machine...

ADVENTURE IDEAS

LIGHT FINGERED

The TARDIS lands on the planet of Verx 3, a feudal world with a low tech level. The time machine is close to a small town, just down a dirt track and in a tiny clearing. The Doctor suggests that they explore the local town, try to blend in and not do anything he wouldn't. With that he's off, dragging his companions with him. When they arrive at the Town of Merly they soon bump into a young Catkind called Arturos Grix – he literally careens into the companions and bounces off the Doctor.

Before the companions and the Doctor can stop him, Arturos is off again, pursued by the town militia. The Doctor's magpie mind won't let him walk away and as he goes to fetch something from his coat, he discovers that his sonic screwdriver is gone. So are the TARDIS key and the psychic paper.

The Doctor joins the chase and once again drags his companions along. He catches up with one of the knights who has lagged behind in the chase, Sir Belven. A breathless discourse with the stranger reveals that the Catkind is a notorious thief. He's been causing all sorts of problems for the people of Merly, stealing from the rich and vanishing without a trace, but this time they have him, for sure.

The Doctor and his companions follow the guards to an abandoned warehouse, where the Doctor convinces the soldiers that he is a powerful wizard, able to perform miracles. He produces a lighter from his pocket and wows the people with fire from his fingers. Once inside the warehouse the Doctor discovers that Arturos has been stealing to feed the town orphans. What will the Doctor and his companions do now? Will they try and save the Catkind from the guards, or let him go to jail. Firstly, the Doctor wants his things back.

Antagonists: The townsfolk, the guards, Sir Belven.

Action Scenes: The chase through the town – make it fun and interesting with lots of chances for chase humour. The toppled-over chicken stall, the flock of sheep moving into the pursuers' way and the narrow alleys all provide interesting obstacles which could help the creature to escape justice.

Problems: The guard assuming the Doctor is in league with the Catkind and the Catkind assuming the Doctor and his companions are out to stop him. The townsfolk getting in the way during the chase. Talking down the guards and Sir Belven to stop them from arresting or killing Arturos.

Things that may be tricky: Sir Belven is a hard man to impress. Also, if there are good looking female companions, they must be prepared to fend off his advances.

Continuing the Adventure: Sir Belven, impressed by the Doctor's panache and his companions (especially any female companions) invites the 'Wizard' to the Royal Court to meet King Tyden and perform some magical feats. Can the Doctor and company convince the Royal Court of the plight of the orphans? Will they care?

DANGEROUS CARGO

The TARDIS materialises on a cargo ship, the Agamemnon, in the year 2671. The time machine has landed in a disused part of the ship, where the lights are down and the crew cannot be bothered to fix the broken circuitry. Captain Adalla Blackmorn is a notorious smuggler on the run from six different police agencies, including the infamous Judoon.

Her latest theft includes six tomb-like cryo-containers taken from a space museum. Now her crew are going missing one-by-one, her first mate has vanished and there are horrible noises coming from the cargo bay. No one she's sent in there to check has returned. Now Adalla and her skeleton staff of three, Jaxx (a one eyed male pirate with terrible dress sense), Durgo (a bruiser of a man who shoots first, questions later) and Kel (a diminutive tech-obsessed girl of 20 years old) are holed up on the bridge whilst they outrun a Judoon ship and try to work out what's going on.

The Doctor and his companions eventually end up on the bridge and have a tense face off with the crew. Adalla accuses the Doctor of being the one who caused all this mess in the first place. The Doctor and his companions must talk down the angry captain and then figure out what's going on in the rear cargo bay. Since the cameras are down, the Doctor uses his Sonic Screwdriver to fix them and when they all view the feed the Doctor's face turns pale.

The cargo bay has been turned into a cyber conversion chamber; there is now a total of ten Cybermen in the bay. To make matters worse, the ship is losing power as the Cybermen drain it from the core. In an hour, the Judoon ship will catch up to the Agamemnon and the Judoon will come aboard, taking no prisoners under Article 341 of the Galactic Law Proclamation. The Doctor and his companions must somehow thwart the Cybermen, get power to the ship so it can continue to run and make sure that the Judoon don't kill everybody onboard.

Things they need to do: Fix the core, re-route the power and short-circuit the cybermen, make a fine gold spray powder (early Cybermen had a vulnerability to gold) and put it through the vents. This will kill them but the Doctor really has no choice – as much as he abhors the thought of death and violence, they have to be stopped.

Antagonists: The Cybermen, the Judoon (if they allow them onboard), Captain Adalla, Jaxx, Kel, Durgo.

Action Scenes: Avoiding the Cybermen, outrunning the Judoon, crawling through vents to get around the ship. Crossing the core itself, a massive well like section of the ship with spinning vent blades, getting to the treasure room to take Adalla's gold to turn into powder.

Problems: Convincing Adalla that they are not the ones responsible for her missing crew, avoiding Cyber-conversion, keeping Kel out of anything and everything since she's so nosy. She would LOVE to travel in the TARDIS if she learns of it.

Things to watch out for: Time, the clock is ticking, the Doctor and his companions have one hour to fix the core and stop the power drain.

Continuing the Adventure: Now that the Cybermen are dealt with, the Doctor is ready to leave. Kel wants to go with him. Adalla informs the Doctor that he must keep the girl safe, the Doctor warns Adalla that isn't always the case with him as they've seen today. Adalla also informs the Doctor that the museum had more of those cases and some other things. When questioned further, the pirate describes a robot with a shiny metallic case, a single eye-stalk and flashing lights.

WAR OF AGES

The TARDIS materialises on planet Earth in the Arthurian era but something is severely wrong. The Time Rotor stills and the TARDIS Cloister Bell rings out a mournful toll: doom, doom, doom. The Doctor checks his settings; he throws levers, hits the console with a small mallet and then kicks something. He informs his companions that they are on Earth, in the dark ages, but something is definitely wrong. He suggests exploring, confident that whatever is going on here he can fix it. The TARDIS has appeared close to Arthur's Camelot; landing in a verdant wood, the Doctor suggests going there first.

Of course, the Doctor has previously been here during the reign of Arthur Pendragon. But something preys on his mind – he's pensive and somewhat distracted. More so than usual. He walks up the long road to Camelot, only to see the smoke on the horizon. Cresting a hill, the characters see Camelot on fire, with dozens of Daleks attacking the castle, flying through the air with their cries of EXTERMINATE!

But what really gives the Doctor cause for concern is Arthur's knights. Led by Sir Lancelot, they are astride flying horses with lances firing beams of coherent light: lasers. Destroyed Daleks litter the ground alongside knights' ruined corpses. Something has vastly accelerated and altered the knights' technology level, or they've been given laser weapons. Bracing himself, the Doctor descends the slippery hillside and makes a run for Camelot.

The Doctor and his companions discover that this war has raged for over a hundred years. The Gold Knights (Daleks) have been at war with Arthur and his knights since they arrived in their Sky Galleon (Void Ship). A mysterious man, known only as the Traveller, came to Arthur's aid and gave him weapons and armour (high tech shields) to battle the Dalek invaders. Without a word, the Traveller vanished and was never seen again. The Doctor is furious that another Time Traveller would be so careless as to alter the time stream like this. Now the Doctor and his companions must help Arthur stop the Daleks, find information on the Traveller and survive a vicious war where there seems to be no end in sight.

Antagonists: Dalek Mordred, Gold Knights (Daleks), The Traveller (a renegade Time Agent, who might, or might not, have just been trying to help), Sir Lancelot, King Arthur and his knights (until they learn who the Doctor is, once again calling him Merlin).

Action Scenes: The epic Dalek and knight battle, lots of laser beams and disintegrations. Camelot burning, dodging knights and Daleks as the Doctor runs to Camelot.

Opportunities for discourse: Talking down Arthur's Knights, Lancelot and meeting King Arthur himself. Talking to Dalek Mordred, who will talk to Merlin (he refuses to call him Doctor). Problems: Getting to the Dalek's Void ship, using the Void Ship to suck the Daleks back in before they devastate Camelot and the Earth. Tracking down the Traveller, now disguised as a simple peasant in a nearby village – he must be stopped before he can do any more damage. Protecting the TARDIS from the Daleks, who will try to capture it.

Continuing the Adventure: Once the Daleks are safely back in their Void Ship, the Doctor sends it on its way. However, there is still the problem of the damage to the time line. Arthur's world was never one of Daleks and lasers: how to set things right? The Doctor and his companions must come up with a solution to reset things properly without disturbing time even more.

DIGGING FOR MORE THAN GOLD

The TARDIS materialises on the planet of Ryloth Four, a blue green world with a similar atmosphere to Earth. The Doctor knows this planet – it has always been ruled by a peaceful government and has some amazing technology.

"OH! I love the Ryloth people: they have seven different gadgets for a relaxing massage. Even better, they have gravity wave manipulators at the sea side; you get just the right amount of tide to sand ratio. Just twiddle a knob on your deck chair and you'll never have wet feet again."

He opens the TARDIS doors and takes a breath, then begins to cough and choke. The beautiful air is laced with a thick layer of sulphur and the blue sky is a dusty yellow. He informs his companions that this isn't right, this isn't right at all!

"Where are the Sky Towers of Ryxellion? Where are all the people and what's that terrible smell?"

Determined to find out, the Doctor leaves the TARDIS and steps out onto a slimy beach. He kicks seaweed off his shoes and shoves his hands into his pockets after closing the TARDIS doors and locking the machine tightly. He wanders along the beach in a despondent and annoyed manner until he reaches a road, where he leads his companions to a small city. What should have been a place that teems with life is now dirty, dusty, grimy, smelly and, most of all, seemingly deserted. There's a lot of sulphur and ash in the air.

As the Doctor and his companions move through the streets, they are approached by a young girl. Her name is Xella and she tells the Doctor that her mother and father were taken away by the green-eyed people. She doesn't know where.

The Doctor offers to help Xella find her mother and father, and everyone else on the planet. On the way to where Xella remembers her parents being taken, the Doctor and his companions discover that there are a few more survivors, people who hid when the green-eyed ones came. The Doctor is concerned about this but can't quite put his finger on the whole green-eyed thing.

Later on, when the Doctor and his companions come face-to-face with a couple of these green-eyed people, the Doctor blurts out, "Changelings, oh I'm so stupid, head full of things and I completely missed it. Thick, thick, thick!"

His suspicions are later confirmed when he finds a Graske, a race of shape-shifting alien troublemakers at the heart of Ryoth's problems. The Graske has replaced the core population of the planet with changelings, putting them to work on digging up the huge technology mountains. The Doctor explains that rather than recycle their old tech, the people of the planet buried it under the ground and put plasticrete over the top of it, the world is a veritable mine of technology for the avaricious and morally dubious Graske.

Now the Doctor and his companions must stop the Graske, rescue the population from the Graske's home world (where they are stored in stasis) and put an end to the creatures' mining operation.

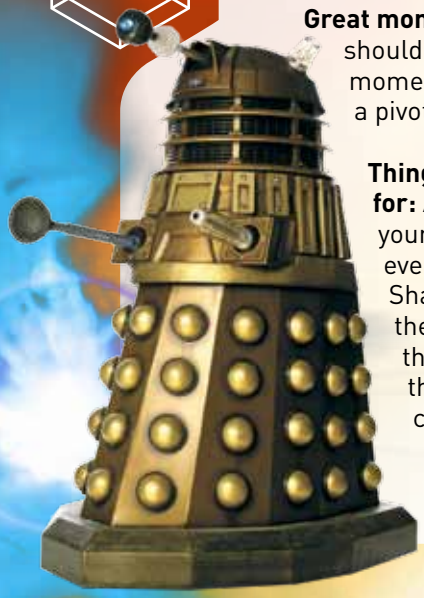
Antagonists: Green-eyed changelings, the Graske.

Action Scenes: The confrontation with the changelings, running – lots of running, shutting down the mine. Getting to the Graske home world, the rescue of the population, putting people back on their home planet. Chasing down the shape-shifting Graske.

Problems: The Graske are shape-shifters; they have a dimensional hopping belt, so catching one is extremely hard.

Great moments: The rescue of the prisoners should be one of those Doctor Who moments; it should evoke emotion and be a pivotal point in the story.

Things that may need to be prepared for: A controlled population – no one is your friend and, willingly or unwillingly, everyone is working for the Graske. Shape-shifting tricks, pretending to be the Doctor or one of his companions, the Graske may seek to escape the planet or trick/capture the companions.



Continuing the Adventure: The people of Ryloth Four are going to have a hard time adjusting to their broken planet; they are going to need a lot of help. The Doctor knows of a renowned terraformer and science specialist, Professor Tora Velnar – as luck would have it, she's on Station 341 at this time. He could go to her and see if she'll help the people recover the planet's lost beauty. Of course, first they'll have to defeat a ravenous carnivorous plant form that's taken over Station 341 but the Doctor doesn't know about this yet...

FISH OUT OF WATER

In the beautiful expanse of New Zealand upon the planet Earth, circa 2010, the Doctor and his companions arrive as the TARDIS lands suddenly, pulled out of flight by a spatial anomaly. The Doctor runs a few scans and finds out that there's a still-closing rift in the area. They seem to have materialised close to a holiday resort under a bright sunlit sky. The Doctor can't help but step out of the TARDIS, breathe in the fresh air and wander towards a small lake in the distance.

As the Doctor and his companions get close to the lake, there's a scream and a frightened woman runs towards them. She seems hysterical and, if they can get her to calm down, she explains that her name is Amanda Worthington and she was taking a walk in the woods close to the far edge of the lake when a creature came looming at her – she thought she was going to die!

The Doctor's companions recognise that grin. He suggests that they take Miss Worthington to the resort and then go for a little look around. The Lakeside Resort is only half a mile away. When they get there, the Doctor orders Miss Worthington a cup of tea and a biscuit. Once he's happy she's settled down and asked a few questions about the creature, they'll be off again to take a look at the woods.

Before they can go, however, one of the local police officers hears the tale. Before they can stop him, he's assembled a small force to go and hunt the creature down. This is the sixth such attack and they're now convinced that, from the

description, a fish-like monster that stumbles out of the woods speaking in a strange language, some of the local lads are playing around.

Officer Keyland introduces himself and, unless the Doctor and his companions use psychic paper or fast-talking to join the group, he will lead his men off. Of course, the Doctor will follow at a discrete distance regardless.

Once they get to the woods, the Doctor discovers the tracks of the creature. He activates his Sonic Screwdriver and sighs with relief. From the trace DNA it's not Silurian – he was really hoping that the Sea Devils were not involved. Finally, there's a shout and a shot, someone has fired upon a monster. It's not a kid in costume, it's a real monster. There are chaotic shouts and yells as the posse gives chase. The Doctor follows.

He's angry and the companions must talk him down. The Doctor despises guns, killing, violence and goes into a rant about humans and their propensity to be great yet thick at the same time – thicker than the Marsh Worms of Vega 2.

The Doctor eludes the posse and finally they discover an injured Hath, one of the fish people the Doctor met in the 61st Century with Donna and Martha. The Doctor and his companions must now protect the Hath from xenophobic humans, get it back aboard the TARDIS and sneak it off the planet before Keyland and his mob find it and kill it.

Fortunately the TARDIS helps translate the Hath language for the Doctor and his companions, so communication with the creature won't be hard at all.

Antagonists: Officer Keyland and his posse. Complications: Keyland and his posse are skittish, xenophobic and will react badly to the Hath if they spot it. The Hath is injured and the medical kit is aboard the TARDIS, the companions can help the Hath if they have the correct gear and skills. The Hath has been shot in the right leg, so it will take longer to sneak it to the TARDIS.

Action Scenes: The chase in the woods, the crazy gun-toting officer and his posse of gun-nuts.

Tense Moments: Meeting an angry and injured Hath, sneaking the Hath to the TARDIS, the first meeting with Officer Keyland. When the Doctor discovers that the Hath has fallen through a hole in time.

Problems: If the Doctor and his companions are caught sneaking the Hath out, they will be fired upon. The officer will also call for backup if he thinks the Doctor and his companions are up to no good.

Continuing the Adventure: The Doctor has the injured Hath aboard the TARDIS, now he must take the Hath somewhere safe, but where and how did the Hath actually arrive on Earth in 2010? A hole in time: that will need plugging, now where to find it...

SOMETHING IN THE DARK

The TARDIS lands on Deep Sea Mining Platform 12, under the Sargasso Ocean on the planet Ryeollon, during the height of Earth's dominance amongst the stars. The Doctor takes his companions off the TARDIS and, through toughened pressure-sealed glass, shows them the bountiful ocean beneath the waves, where hordes of tiny neon-green and blue fish swim in shoals. The Doctor points out that no matter how far the human race has come in the stars, it barely mapped the ocean on Earth before it spread its wings to fly into the cosmos.

The companions witness large diving suits moving around, with massive laser drills. As they are watching this, a security patrol comes wandering by. Chief Zella, a tough dark skinned Earth woman with a bright smile. She demands to know where the Doctor and his companions have come from; it's time for some fast-talking, or the Doctor's trademark psychic paper. Of course, the paper will fail since Zella is trained to look through it. Before she can be convinced, there is a call on the communicator. Rather than leave the Doctor and his companions where they are, she demands they come with her.

The Doctor is led to the command platform of the station, where he discovers an Ood, one of the slave-race of aliens that Earth used to make things easier for them. This Ood, Ood Beta is

protesting that it did not kill Engineer Chief Morgan. The Ood argues that it is subservient and no danger to anyone. The Doctor knows otherwise and isn't convinced – he remembers certain events that led to a massacre and the release of something terrible.

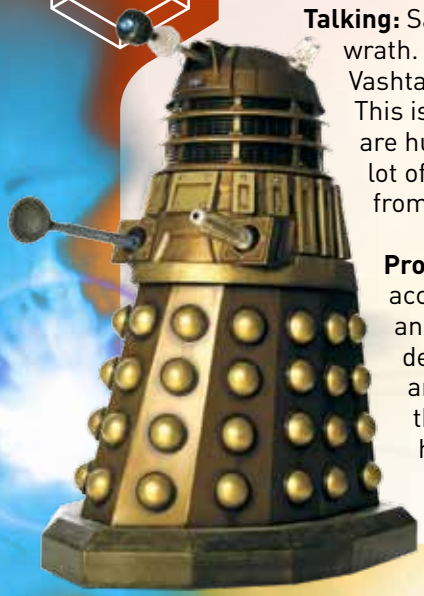
Zella isn't convinced either, she's read the reports regarding the incident but isn't ready to pull the trigger on Ood Beta yet. As the group are gathered the Ood delivers a dark message as the orb glows between its hands.

"They have awoken, they have awoken in the darkness and they have begun to feed."

Ood Beta refers to the 'Piranha of the Dark' – the Vashta Nerada, the microscopic swarm that feeds on flesh. Somewhere on the platform someone brought in a package and now the conditions are right, the spores have hatched and the Vashta Nerada is loose on Platform 12. The Doctor must convince the people that the Ood is blameless, prevent the Vashta Nerada from claiming more lives and help his companions overcome the swarm as it takes control of a massive deep-sea mining mech-suit armed with a high power laser drill and sonic disrupters.

Antagonists: The Vashta Nerada, the crew of the platform and Zella, until the Doctor convinces her/them he's here to help.

Action Scenes: Confronting the mining-suit with the Vashta Nerada inside. Running through the tightly packed corridors of the platform as the lights go out. Getting people into the escape pods before the Vashta Nerada can devour them.



Talking: Saving the Ood from the human's wrath. The Doctor can try and talk the Vashta Nerada down, just as he did before. This is a dangerous swarm though, they are hungry – so hungry – and it will take a lot of persuasion to get them safely away from Platform 12.

Problems: The Vashta Nerada accidentally break a pressure seal and now the platform is in danger of depressurisation. Water is pouring in and the companions must work with the Doctor to repair the seals. The humans still don't trust Ood Beta, so the Doctor and companions are stuck with him. He is a slow moving creature and prefers to amble even when his life is in danger. He provides a good way to add extra tension since the Doctor won't let him die and nor should his companions.

Things that need special attention: The Vashta Nerada work best in the dark, or in shadows. Companions should count their shadows and be on edge at all times.

Continuing the Adventure: Once the Vashta Nerada is contained, they will need to be deposited somewhere safe. Preferably a planet with lots of abundant forests, animal life and insects to feed from. The Doctor suggests the planet of Ness, famous for its wonderful forests. On the way the Vashta Nerada forms a plan to steal the TARDIS and spread further across the stars than ever before. Ood Beta stays behind to help the survivors of Platform 12 deal with the damage, he warns the Doctor that he can feel a great shadow rising.

ONCE BITTEN, TWICE REMOVED

The TARDIS arrives in 1790, on Earth, Paris during the French revolution. Upon exiting the TARDIS, the Doctor and his companions are arrested by a regiment of soldiers. Rather than cause any further disturbance the Doctor agrees to go along with them, the TARDIS already locked up tight. He and his companions watch as the TARDIS is loaded onto a cart and carried off as the spoils of war. The Doctor is not best pleased but allows himself to be taken to the local guard house, where he's locked in a cell with his companions.

The guard leaves and now the Doctor and his companions are free to make their escape plans. Of course the Doctor is about to spring the lock on his cell when he overhears a conversation in the hall, something about yet another death, a body drained of all blood. He changes his mind and waits.

After a short amount of time another guard arrives, Francois Devalin, Captain of the Paris city watch. He is intent in interrogating the

prisoners but something about the Doctor tips him off, he's seen pictures of this man, painted pictures around the court and was told to keep watch by his family, some of them who remembered the events surrounding Madame Du Pompadour.

He asks directly, "Are you the Doctor?"

The Doctor smiles and says, "None other, now how about you let me and my friends out of this cell and we can talk like civilised people?"

Francois lets the Doctor and his companions out, informs the Doctor that his blue box has been safely stored in the courtyard and apologises profusely, explains that there is a revolution and things are a little tricky at the moment. Then he asks the Doctor for help with another problem. The homeless, ordinary men and women, guards even, they have all been found drained of blood in the alleys and backstreets of Paris.

The Doctor and his companions must assist the city guard. He examines a body with his Sonic Screwdriver and discovers that the marks are associated with a Plasmavore. Now the Doctor and his companions must hunt the creature down, stop it from claiming any more lives and avoid being targeted by the French Revolution as Paris is afire with hate and distrust.

Antagonists: The Plasmavore (in the body of a French Noblewoman), Rioters, Slabs (the Plasmavore's henchmen).

Action Scenes: Avoiding a riot, running from the henchmen of the Plasmavore, tracking the Plasmavore in the darkness of Paris' streets. Stopping an angry mob from torching a house.

Things to do: Find dead bodies; track down the Plasmavore's lair.

Problems: The rioting in Paris is getting worse; the guard are losing control of the city. The Plasmavore is causing panic and chaos in the streets; random houses are being burned down. The Plasmavore has several Slab guards. The Doctor will not want her killed; however the guard will insist she loses her head to Madame Guillotine.

Continuing the Adventure: The Plasmavore tells the Doctor that there are worse things out there, warning him of the return of a Great One. This could lead to a battle against one of the first vampires, or even Fenric reborn.

HOW THE MIGHTY HAVE FALLEN!

Following a bumpy ride, the TARDIS materialises on the planet of Beta Rafulon Zang in the year of 4001. The planet is being invaded by the Sycorax but, just as the mighty warriors prepared to attack their prey, a catastrophic power failure ripped through their vessel and it crash landed on the planet. The Sycorax's ship is now marooned here and, under a dark sky, they have enslaved the population to help them repair the vessel and mine the mineral wealth of the world. They plan to take half the people to sell as slaves to recoup their losses.

The Doctor soon discovers this and now he and his companions must thwart the Sycorax invaders, stop their blood control, help the people of Beta Rafulon Zang rebel and get the Sycorax off world. To this end the Doctor will try to call a truce with the invaders, as long as they let everyone go. Of course, to prove themselves, the Sycorax will demand a trial by combat. One of the companions could step up to the plate or, failing that, a warrior by the name of Kal Damok will step forward to champion the Doctor and his friends.

After the single combat is decided and the Sycorax lose, they will capture the Doctor and try to get him to reveal secrets of his TARDIS. The Doctor refuses and they put him to work in the mine, along with his companions. The Doctor and friends must now escape the mine, free the trapped miners, confront the Sycorax again and this time force them off world for good.

The Sycorax will back down if threatened enough.

Antagonists: Raxulos (Sycorax leader), Sycorax, blood dominated population.

Action Scenes: The one on one duel with Raxulos' champion, running from blood dominated people. Breaking out of the mine, freeing the prisoners, a second confrontation

with Raxulos' champion, confronting Raxulos.

Problems: The Doctor does not want to kill or injure the blood dominated, nor does he want to harm the Sycorax unless he really has to. No second chances, that's the kind of man he is.

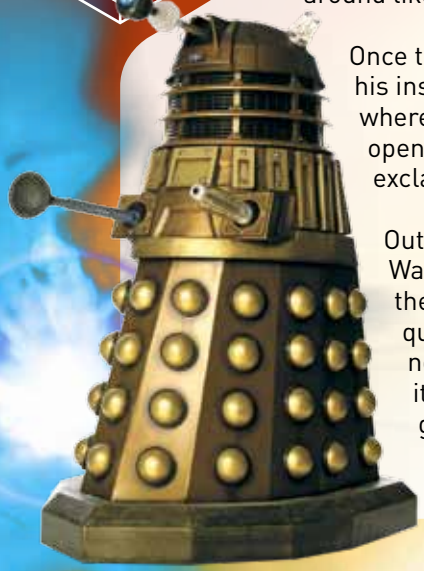
Really cool moments: The battle on the bridge of the Sycorax ship, sneaking around the mine in the dark, leading a rebellion of prisoners.

Things that may be tricky: Stopping the Sycorax's blood control, repairing their ship, convincing them to leave taking no spoils or slaves whatsoever.

Continuing the Adventure: The Doctor decides to follow the Sycorax; he doesn't trust them as far as he could tow their ship. As the ship is about to break orbit, the Doctor spots something on a nearby moon, his magpie mind takes over and he has to investigate. The faint energy signature catches his attention and he lands the TARDIS... what could be there?

WORLD WAR WHAT?

The TARDIS is travelling through time and space, with the Doctor is at the controls, making sure that the box isn't ripped apart by the ebb and flow of the Vortex. There is a sudden wobble, a lurch, a crunch, flames, sparks and the Time Rotor stops. Then it cycles backwards as the Doctor's hands fly over the controls. Suddenly it shudders again and then there's a feeling of falling, rolling, tumbling and the TARDIS crew are shaken around like ragdolls.



Once the Doctor has regained his senses, his instruments are out; he has no idea of where or when they are. As he cautiously opens the TARDIS door he blinks exclaiming, "World War WHAT?"

Outside is a perfect replica of World War One era Earth, the trenches and the dug-outs all crafted to an excellent quality. The sky above is not of Earth, not even close. The Doctor recognises it and, as a massive explosion goes off near the TARDIS (which is precariously perched on the edge of a trench), he blinks again.

"We're on Sontar."

True to form, two opposing battle forces of Sontarans square off. The TARDIS slips down into a deep trench and a wave of brown muddy water surges through the door. The Doctor concludes, "This day can't get any worse."

Now the Doctor and his companions must find out what's wrong with the TARDIS, avoid the Sontaran forces, sneak into one of the bases, steal a Cryellon Crystal and repower his machine so they can escape before the warlike Sontarans (who are playing wargames and testing themselves against each other in battle) blow the Doctor and his companions sky high.

Antagonists: Sontaran Brex, Sontaran Glix (the two war leaders), Sontarans.

Action Scenes: Sneaking along the replica trenches, avoiding Sontarans, disabling them with a blow to the back of the neck. Sneaking into the Sontaran base camp.

Things to Do: Repair the TARDIS – the Doctor discovers that something has blown one of the Cryellon Crystal fuses. He needs to find a replacement or something he can use his jiggery-pokery skills on to make do until he can get a new one. Sneak into the Sontaran base camps, they have to have something the Doctor can use!

Problems: The Sontarans. They would love to test themselves against the Doctor and his companions. After all, he has defeated them several times in the past. This battleground makes the perfect place for their adversary to finally die!

Continuing the Adventure: The Sontarans have planned an invasion of Earth using a stolen Dalek time machine. They plan to go back to World War One and win, thus changing the course of history for ever by siding with the Hun. They will be hailed as mighty war leaders and the Doctor's favourite world will be theirs!